

THE
HAPPY FAMILY,
A DRAMA,
 IN FIVE ACTS.

FROM
 THE GERMAN OF AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE.

BY
 BENJAMIN THOMPSON,

Translator of "The Stranger."

AS PERFORMED AT
 THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

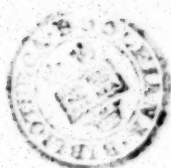
— I should guess
 If e'er Content deign'd visit mortal clime,
 This was her place of dearest residence.

MASON.

D U B L I N :

PRINTED FOR G. BURNET, P. WOGAN, W. PORTER,
 J. MOORE, W. JONES, J. MILLIKEN, J. RICE,
 B. DORNIN, N. KELLY, H. FITZPATRICK,
 G. FOLINGSBY T. BURNSIDE,
 AND D. GRAISBERRY.

1800.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

WELLING, *a rich Farmer.*

Mrs: WELLING, *his Wife.*

FREDERICK, }
PAULINA, } *their Children.*
ROSA, }

LEWIS, *their adopted Child.*

REHBERG, *a poor Clergyman.*

DALNER, *chief Forester.*

ERNORF, *Under-Secretary of the District.*

Count LOHRSTEIN.

BRAVE, *Lieutenant of Hussars.*

ZAHN, *a Courtier.*

FRANCIS, }
JACOB, } *Count Lohrstein's Servants.*

The scene lies in a village on the borders of a German principality, and an adjoining wood.

THE
HAPPY FAMILY.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE,

A room in Welling's house, from which are various doors to a dining-room, a study, his daughters' chambers, &c. On one side is a large closet. The furniture is strong. Taste and elegance every where prevail, unmixed with ostentation, but evidently shewing the owner of the house to be in good circumstances. Paulina and Rosa are discovered spinning; Frederick and Lewis are engaged in making a large net. The clock strikes five.

Lew. FIVE o'clock.

Pau. They'll soon rise, now.

Fre. I heard my father cough.

Ros. And I saw my mother throw barley out of the window to the pigeons.

Fre. Have you all your presents ready?

Pau. Mine is in my pocket.

Ros. [*Pointing at the tab.è.*] Mine is under that white cloth.

Fre. And mine is in the court.

Lew. [*Aside, with a sigh.*] I alone have nothing to offer.

Pau. [*To Fre.*] May one ask what it is?

Fre. [*Jocosely.*] Can you keep a secret?

Pau. Oh yes.

Fre. So can I.

Pau. Well, I am not so cruel. I have woven some handkerchiefs for my mother; and for my father—guess.

Fre. It will not be worth while.

Pau. Ha! ha! ha! do you hear, Lewis? What think you?

Lew. He is probably right.

Pau. How modest! But, Frederick, I'll tell you—Lewis has made some verses for me: they are so sweet and affecting—

Fre. I don't understand verses.

Lew. Paulina is so kind as to think them tolerable.

Pau. Mr. Ernorf makes verses too, but nobody can understand them.

Fre. Hark! They are coming.

[*All rise, and stand in anxious suspense.*]

Ros. No—it was the servant below.

[*They return to their work.*]

Fre. My father and mother must be very happy to-day.

Pau. That they always are.

Fre. Yes; but only consider they have been married twenty-five years to-day.

Ros. And did you hear what my father said when they went to bed last night? They had not quarrelled, for all that time, for twenty-five minutes.

Pau. He had tears in his eyes when he mentioned it.

Ros. My mother pressed his hand, too.

Fre. And looked as affectionate as a bride.

Lew. [*Sighing.*] It is a singular happiness.

Pau.

Pau. They are singular people.

Ros. God blefs them !

Fre. And soon fend me a wife !

Pau. [*Archly.*] You have made a choice, I think ?

Fre. Perhaps I have.

Ros. The Forester's daughter ?

Fre. She is a good girl.

Lew. Brother, I wish you joy.

Pau. I wish her father may not have higher views.

Fre. Well ! who knows what may happen ?

Ros. Hark ! now they are coming.

[*All again rise and look anxiously around.*]

Enter Ernorf.

Ros. Oh no—It is Mr. Ernorf.

Pau. [*In a disappointed tone.*] Only Mr. Ernorf.

Fre. [*The same.*] Good morning to you, Mr. Ernorf. How happens it that you are abroad so early ?

Ern. The Muses and Graces awoke me.

Pau. The cock awoke us by crowing.

Ern. This is Mr. Welling's wedding-day.

Ros. Do you mean that for news ?

Ern. The news is to come. As Miss Paulina yesterday signified that she wished to celebrate the happy event by an ode, I have prepared one.

[*Draws a paper from his pocket, and delivers it with self-satisfaction.*]

Pau. I am much obliged to you, but it is too late.

Ern. Too late !

Pau. I am already provided with one.

Ern. [*Consequentially.*] I should like to know where

where a poet could be found within many miles, who—

Pau. You need not go so far to find him.

Ros. [*Laughing.*] Not many steps.

Fre. Lewis—

Ern. [*With a smile of contempt and derision.*] This young man?—Ha! ha!—May one be allowed a sight of the attempt?

Pau. Here it is.

Ern. [*Muttering as he reads.*] Happy pair—knows no care—domestic joy—never cloy—very tolerable if they had a little energy in them. I always say, that when one reads a solemn poem, the breast ought to be contracted, the breath to fail, the eye to start from the head, and every vein to swell.

Fre. Heaven forbid!

Pau. I like the poetry which inspires gentle sensibility.

Ern. Oh, that was the fashion thirty years ago, when your Yoricks used to take their sentimental trips, but in our days nothing will do but hexameters.

Fre. What are those?

Ern. You shall hear directly. [*To Lewis.*] Don't be ashamed, young man. (*Coughs, and prepares to read.*)

Pau. I thank you, Mr. Ernorf, but if your verses be the best that were ever written, they can't now be of any use to me.

Ern. Oh, I beg pardon. Only listen (*Scans.*)
 "Rise with | splendour a | bove the ho | rizon
 | hot sweating | Phœbus."

Fre. Who is that poor fellow?

Ern.

Ern. Pst!—"Look on thy | humble bard |
and smile | from thy e | therial coach-box."

Pau. Far too high, Mr. Ernorf.

Ern. Be patient. We shall soon descend.
"Here see a | couple with | Love's wrinkles |
like | Phi | lemon and | Baucis." |

Lew. Love has no wrinkles.

Ern. I almost believe you mean to criticise,
Sir.

Lew. [*Apologizing.*] By no means. I beg
pardon.

Ern. There! You can't support the cha-
racter you assume, for a critic never begs par-
don. You will, therefore, do better if you em-
ploy yourself in procuring a certificate of your
birth. The times are dangerous, and our
prince will not harbour any—

Lew. Speak it boldly—vagrants.

Ern. Exactly.

Fre. (*Gravely.*) Enough, Mr. Ernorf.

Pau. (*Exasperated.*) Too much, I think.
He, who is treated by my father as his own son,
must be a good man, though he may not be able
to write hexameters.

Lew. I thank you, dear Paulina.

Ern. Your father is not in office as I am.
He has not such heavy duties upon him. But
—I fear—

Pau. What?

Ern. That some investigation must be made.

Pau. Into what?

Ern. Into the rank, age, name, origin, and
employment of this young man—this votary of
the Muses.

Pau. Oh, Lewis! It would have been bet-

ter if you had suffered Love to be covered with wrinkles.

Lew. He, who makes use of his office to revenge a fancied insult—

Fre. Is a—

Ros. An under-secretary.

Pau. My father and mother are coming.
[*All rise. The girls collect their presents.*]

Ern. (*Aside.*) How provoking! Why could they not sleep another hour?

Enter Welling and Mrs. Welling.

[*They are immediately surrounded by their children, who call:*]

Good morning, dear father! Many more happy years to you, dear mother!

Wel. and Mrs. W. Thank you—thank you, good children.

Pau. Mother, I have—

Ros. Father, here is—

Fre. Stop! I am the oldest.

Pau. In filial affection age has no claim.

Ros. Look here, father.

Fre. Come to the window, father.

Pau. Read this, father.

Wel. Children, one after another. What have you there, Rosa?

Ros. A pair of gloves, made by myself.

Well. I thank you, my dear girl

Pau. And here are some handkerchiefs for you, mother, spun and made by myself—and a poem for my father.

Well. (*Reads it.*) The sentiments are beautifully expressed. I guess who is the author. Lewis, why do you stand in that corner?

Lew.

Lewis. (Distressed.) I have nothing to give you.

Wel. A kind word, at least, I hope—a sincere congratulation?

Lew. God fees my heart.

Wel. Come nearer, then, that I may see it too.

Lew. Oh, my benefactor! How I wish you could!

Wel. I do. *(Shakes his hand.)* It is swimming in your eye.—Well, Frederick?

Fre. To the window, father!

Wel. Why? *(Goes to it.)*

Fre. Do you see what the man is leading across the court?

Wel. A handsome horse.

Fre. You don't remember it?

Wel. No.

Fre. Don't you recollect about three years ago, that you admired our neighbour's foal?

Wel. I did, and afterwards heard that it was dead.

Fre. That was a deception, for I bought it with my pocket money, and was resolved, when it was in condition, to surprise you agreeably with the sight of it.

Wel. I thank you, my son.

Pau. Dear, good parents, give us your blessing.

Ros. Your blessing. *[The children kneel.]*

Wel. and Mrs. W. (bending with emotion over them.) God bless you:

Wel. (To Lewis who wipes his eyes.) You too, good Lewis!

Lew. (Seizes his hand, and eagerly kisses it.) Then have I again found a father.

Wel. As long as I live. *(The children rise.)*

Wel.

Wel. Good morning, Mr. Ernorf. Don't take it amiss that I did not welcome you sooner. The heart has its privileges.

Ern. "See, I | come to your | hospita | ble board | congratu | lating."

Wel. At which I shall be glad to see you.

Ern. I will have that pleasure. It is a family jubilee ; and perhaps—

Fre. Father !

Ern. Perhaps, I say—

Fre. All our people are assembled in the court.

Ern. Perhaps, I say—

Fre. They want to congratulate you.

Pau. They have all made garlands and wreaths.

Wel. Come, then, such wreaths are more valuable than crowns, for affection twined them together.

[*Exeunt Wel. Mrs. Wel. Fre. Pau. and Lew.*]

Ern. Perhaps, I say——very civil conduct indeed !

Lew. You must make some allowances for the bustle of the day.

Ern. So it seems your fine verses are liked ?

Lew. These good people consider my good intention.

Ern. You have been at school, then, as you think yourself capable of writing poetry ?

Lew. I seldom write poetry.

Ern. In that you are perfectly right, for your muse would not repay the many obligations which this family——

Lew. I often remind myself of those obligations, and should be ashamed if it were necessary for another to do it.

Ern. It certainly was a lucky circumstance for

for you, that Mr. Welling should just happen to enter the inn, as the recruiting party was going to take you away.

Lew. I acknowledge it.

Ern. And that he should be so generous or weak as to pay forty dollars for your discharge.

Lew. You, Sir, I suppose, only do this in poetry.

Ern. What do you mean by that?

Lew. It is said that poets are, from the nature of their profession, only capable of describing good actions.

Ern. (Offended.) I am much inclined to prove the contrary this very day, by ridding the neighbourhood of a conceited fellow.

Lew. In that you would be perfectly right.

Ern. And this conceited fellow is yourself.

Dixi.

Lew. I do not regard your scornful language, for it cannot disgrace me: but I should like to know by what right——

Ern. (Enraged.) What! I no right! I, Under-Secretary to his Serene Highness, own cousin to the Cabinet-President's house-keeper—joint Editor of a Critical Journal!—

Enter Paulina.

Pau. For heaven's sake what is the cause of all this noise?

Lew. (Smiling.) Mr. Under-Secretary Ernorf is just demonstrating to me that he has a right to be rude.

Pau. I think no one has that right; especially in a stranger's house.

Ern. (Suddenly assuming a look of friendly complacency.)

complacency.) Can I consider this as a stranger's house?

Pau. As far as I know, you may.

Ern. Not a word, then, of the confidential connection between us?

Pau. Between us!—But yes. We stood as godfather and godmother together, about two years ago.

Ern. Oh, that is only a spiritual connection.

Pau. We will let it rest there, then.

Ern. You are joking, fair Paulina; but when I have spoken a serious word to your parents, you will joke no more.

Pau. That I believe.

Ern. Who knows what may happen to-day?

Pau. Oh!

Ern. This timid sigh assures me that my happiness is not far distant.

Pau. I think, Mr. Enorf, you should have a wife, who understands hexameters better than I do.

Ern. Had I but been allowed to proceed—

Pau. We had but just left our beds—(*yawning.*)—were we so soon again—

Ern. (*Offended.*) Miss Paulina is very witty and sarcastic. The melodious lines of this Arcadian swain probably pleased her better.

Pau. Most certainly they did.

Ern. But they will probably be the last, which he will make in this country.

Pau. Well, we can live without verses.

Ern. And without the poet, for he will tomorrow be cited to appear, and if he cannot produce the necessary credentials, will be transported beyond the confines. *Dixi.* *[Exit.*

Pau.

Pau. He threatens.

Lew. To give satisfaction to his vanity.

Pau. But he may involve you in difficulties.
It would be better to declare who you are.

Lew. Does Paulina wish to know it?

Pea. It makes no difference to me. I know
you are a good man.

Lew. Is not that the best title?

Pau. In our house, it is.

Lew. Your house is my world.

Pau. But should my father be compelled to
send you away?

Lew. Then I'll go.

Pau. And will you distress us thus by obstinacy?

Lew. You wrong me.

Pau. We are all so fond of you.

Lew. Paulina too?

Pau. I am indeed, and was before you drew
the poor child out of the pond, and—

Lew. I shall, then, take your good wishes
with me into banishment.

Pau. Rather stay, and be happy with us.

Lew. That I am.

Pau. Yet sometimes you seem to forget
yourself, and your eyes are full of tears.

Lew. I do not complain.

Pau. So much the worse, for, if you did, one
might relieve you.

Lew. Alas, no.

Pau. But at least console you.

Lew. No.

Pau. Have you then no hope on earth?

Lew. None.

Pau. (*Seriously.*) Lewis—you have not com-
mitted any crime?

Lew.

Lew. (*Lays his hand on his breast.*) That have I not.

Pau. None but the guilty can be quite devoid of hope.

Lew. That is a pious falsehood.

Pau. A good man every where inspires confidence.

Lew. I have found it.

Pau. And friendship—

Lew. Sustains my life.

Pau. (*With timid uncertainty.*) And love—

Lew. Alas! love I must renounce.

Pau. Why?

Lew. Poor, without a name—

Pau. Who falls in love with names?

Lew. Without parents, without—

Pau. Any more?

Lew. Perhaps I have too long remained in a house, where captivating innocence, united with sisterly affection have deceived my heart with lovely visions—where the danger of appearing ungrateful increases every hour, and the pleasure of daily beholding Paulina may at last rob me of my only treasure—a good conscience. [*Exit hastily.*]

Pau. What does he mean?—Is it a sin to love me?—When there was a great fire in our village, and he carried the old man on his back through the flames, did not my father himself allow him to call me sister? “Love him as your brother,” he said to us all, “for he deserves it.” I have loved him as my brother, and what is the consequence?—Mysterious man!

Enter Frederick hastily.

Fre. Away, sister!

Pau.

Pau. Why ?

Fre. My father and mother are coming.

Pau. Why should I run away from them ?

Fre. I have been talking to my mother, about my dear Louisa, and she is going to mention it to my father.

Pau. I wish you success, brother.

Fre. And Mr. Dalner will soon be here, too.

Pau. Hark ! They are coming.

Fre. Go, then, and tell Rosa not to disturb them, while I run to the dove-cot, and watch when Mr. Dalner comes. *[Runs away.]*

Pau. Now will he be so violent that he'll spoil a nest or two. The poor pigeons ! *(Sighing.)*
Poor Paulina ! *[Exit into her room.]*

Enter Welling and Mrs. Welling, arm in arm.

Mrs. W. I hope you approve of my having sent to invite my poor relations.

Wel. Approve ! I do indeed, and am angry with myself that it did not occur to me.

Mrs. W. The good people come so seldom, and are so reserved on account of their poverty.

Wel. For that reason we must give them a more hearty welcome, that they may not reckon us among the creatures who find delight in ostentatiously exhibiting their wealth to poor relations, and making every morsel nauseous by humiliating arrogance.

Mrs. W. I may place my old uncle at the top of the table—may I not ?

Wel. Certainly.

Mrs. W. Mr. Dalner won't be offended ?

Wel. Not he—nor Rehberg.

c

Mrs. W.

Mrs. W. Oh, I am not afraid of his being so; for he had rather himself belong to the family.

Wel. How so?

Mrs. W. Have not you perceived that he is fond of Rosa?

Wel. The mother is always quicker in discoveries of this kind than the father, but I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. W. Yet I don't altogether like it.

Wel. Why not? Rehberg is a worthy young man.

Mrs. W. The world says a great deal against him.

Wel. Scandal.

Mrs. W. It is said that he does not strictly conform to the orthodox belief.

Wel. His conduct is upright, and I have often before remarked, that calumny does not attack a man's *opinions* till his *conduct* is found to be irreproachable.

Mrs. W. His intercourse with the Secretary's daughters appears to many of a suspicious nature.

Wel. Because many feel what many would do in Rehberg's situation.

Mrs. W. It is said, too, that he squanders his small fortune away at cards, when at the Secretary's house.

Wel. Ann, you know I hate that term, "It is said," when an honest man's character is concerned. Is he in debt?

Mrs. W. Not exactly that, but he had a good library, which he lately sold for a trifle to an antiquarian, who was passing through the place.

Wel. What is that to us?

Mrs. W.

Mrs. W. I am sorry for it. The school-master says, that when the man took the books away, Rehberg looked out of the window after him, and tears stood in his eyes.

Wel. Pshaw! If you will give the school-master a pint of beer, and his wife a cup of coffee, you may hear a hundred such stories. I cannot bear that any one's good name should be destroyed to afford conversation at a tea-table, that the gosling should catch it from the goose, and learn to hiss at every one who is quietly passing by.

Mrs. W. (*Surveying him calmly and affectionately.*) I know this censure was not intended for me.

Wel. (*Gives her his hand.*) Heaven forbid! You are a good woman, and I dare be sworn you will receive Rehberg kindly.

Mrs. W. That I will.

Wel. I would willingly see none but smiling countenances to-day.

Mrs. W. Then I fear Frederick must not come to table.

Wel. Why not?

Mrs. W. He has something on his mind.

Wel. Nothing wrong, I hope?

Mrs. W. Oh, no—he thinks of marrying.

Wel. If his choice be proper—

Mrs. W. It is.

Wel. And the girl likes him—

Mrs. W. She does—but her rank is rather above his—Dalner's daughter.

Wel. H-m—with all my heart—if the father will give his consent.

Mrs. W. There lies the difficulty. He shook his head.

Wel. He is a sensible man, and my friend.

Mrs. W. He is coming hither to converse with you on the subject.

Wel. I am glad of it. Such men as he and I shall soon understand each other.

Mrs. W. May I give Frederick any encouragement? I see the poor fellow's stationed at the door.

Wel. (*Turns round.*) Frederick, what are you doing there? Do you avoid your father?

Enter Frederick, fearfully.

Fre. Father, Mr. Dalner will be here directly.

Wel. Are you afraid of him?

Fre. I don't know. I am not timorous in general; but for several weeks, I have felt all day, as if there was a storm in the air, and all night as if a fire would break out in the village.

Wel. (*Smiling.*) Yes, yes. But are you thoroughly convinced that you will be happy with the girl?

Fre. (*Strikes his breast with both hands.*) I am indeed.

Wel. As happy as your parents?

Fre. We love each other as sincerely as they do.

Wel. We are not speaking of days, but years.

Fre. So will I by God's assistance, speak to my son in five and twenty years.

Wel. 'Tis well. Go with your mother, while I speak to Dalner.

Fre. (*Kisses his hand in great emotion.*) Father—
ther—

ther—yes, father—you must speak—for I—I can't speak. [*Exeunt Mrs. W. and Frederick.*]

Wel. (Alone.) Yes. From my heart I wish to bind him to his present rank in life for ever. A good wife will complete what habit and education have founded. Then I shall die in peace, and he may pry into the secrets of yon closet. What he finds there will not cause him a sleepless night

Enter Dalner.

Dal. Joy be with you, neighbour! Your hand! (*Shakes it.*) Understood?

Wel. It is the congratulation of an honest man.

Dal. Right, by my soul. It comes from the heart. I walked hither, and stumbled so often, that I nearly broke my neck two or three times, for I was calling to mind those happy days, when my Maria was alive, and we so often used to spend our Sundays together like good neighbours—

Wel. Talking of peace and war—

Dal. While our wives talked of pies and puddings—

Wel. And our children were playing round us.

Dal. Then we used to wander to the tall oak. Neighbour, when I passed that oak to-day, I felt an odd sensation. I could see the church-yard from it—Understood? The trees, which I planted there—you know where—are grown large and handsome. I saw them peering above the wall, and my eyes—understood?

Wel. You would have been married almost as long as myself.

Dal. True. When I espied your house, I was
C 3 well

well again. It is the house, thought I, of a man, whom I have known for twenty-seven years. I have two things on which I can still rely,—my gun and my friend Welling.

Wel. (*Kindly offers his hand.*) Your sincere friend, Welling.

Dal. Well, we may perhaps, be united still closer, if we do, as two young people seem to wish. Understood?

Wel. Almost.

Dal. Your son has taken a liking to my daughter, and she by no means seems cruel.

Wel. So much the better.

Dal. Perhaps it may be so, but allow me, neighbour, to ask what your intentions are respecting the young man.

Wel. He is my only son, and my heir.

Dal. What do you mean to make of him?

Wel. A countryman, like his father.

Dal. To that I have no objection. Heaven bless all honest countrymen! They are the trees, and all other people the caterpillars, who feast upon their leaves.

Wel. 'Tis well. If such be your sentiments—

Dal. Such are *my* sentiments, but I have still to ask another question. Were we not old friends I should be ashamed of doing it—but you know me. You know I never was tormented by that demon—*pride*. We have lived on the terms of brothers. I have never asked where you came from, who you are, and so forth.

Wel. I have often felt the obligation you conferred upon me by this silence.

Dal. Nor should I have ever said a word on that subject, had not this affair of the children—
Understand

Understand me properly, neighbour—not that I have any scruples. No. An honest man is a nobleman. But I have two brothers, who are as proud as Lucifer. They are both rich, and my daughter will inherit their property,—*nota bene*, if she marries with their consent.

Wel. Poor Frederick!

Dal. Why so? You are rich, and that goes a great way. But *one* stone lies in the way—your origin. (*With sincere good humour.*) Don't be offended.

Wel. By no means.

Dal. People are fond of talking, and some account of you has reached the ears of my brothers. When you arrived here twenty-seven years ago, and your late father-in-law farmer Wiedeman treated you so kindly, it was said you were a foundling, and when the magistracy insisted on your producing a certificate of your birth—

Wel. I appealed to the Prince in person.

Dal. Very true. And as the Secretary here dropped the subject, nay was afterwards seen to take off his hat as he passed you, it was rumoured that he had received orders from court not to molest you.

Wel. He probably had.

Dal. The wise folks then maintained that you were certainly the natural son of some distinguished personage. Understood?

Wel. Perfectly.

Dal. One of my brothers was then tutor to the pages at court, and stated that your audience with the Prince exceeded an hour.

Wel. It did.

Dal.

Dal. The world, therefore, not knowing what to make of the matter—

Wel. Made something bad of it. That is natural.

Dal. But you see, if I could retain the family property for my daughter—but without a mean action—Understood?

Wel. Certainly, you would be glad to do it.

Dal. You would, therefore, oblige me, if you would entrust me with a few particulars of your descent.

Wel. My dear friend, I will do it with pleasure, for I am sure you will not make a bad use of my confidence. The time too, when this discovery might be attended with danger, is past, for my enemies have forgotten me. I am, by birth, a nobleman—

Dal. A nobleman!

Wel. The last branch of the old house of Wellingrode. I was fortunate enough in my youth, to become the favourite of a prince, and unfortunate enough to have none but honest intentions towards him.

Dal. I understand. You wanted to introduce truth at court.

Wel. The intrigues of an ambitious woman, (who wished to raise her husband to the rank of prime-minister, in order to govern through him) hurled me from my eminence. I was accused of treason,—my property was confiscated, and bestowed upon the new favourite. I escaped imprisonment by flight. How I was pursued, and what I endured I will relate at another time. At present I will merely confine myself to the lucky turn of my fortunes.

Dal.

Dal. Right—how you were metamorphosed from a nobleman into a peasant?

Wel. My late father-in-law had rented a farm on my mother's estate, and I had always heard him mentioned as an upright man.

Dal. He was one.

Wel. No longer knowing where I could be secure from the spies of my victorious rival, I suddenly remembered this old faithful servant. I clothed myself as a peasant, cut my hair, and on a summer's evening arrived at the house of Hans Wiedeman.

Dal. I'll bet a wager you were received with open arms.

Wel. Gently rest the ashes of that worthy man!—At first I merely meant to stay with him till the storm was blown over, and I forgotten. That I might not, in the mean time, be without employment, I began to cultivate a part of the garden. My Ann was then but fourteen years of age, and assisted me.

Dal. Yes, yes—I understand.

Wel. You are mistaken. Much as I admired her, I little thought that we should celebrate a day like this. But the garden soon became too confined for me, and I began to accompany good Wiedeman to the field. I acquired a love of agriculture. I daily felt fresh air and industry enliven both my body and the mind. I was healthier than before, and I was happier than before.

Dal. I can easily conceive it.

Wel. One evening as I was walking alone across the meadows, the idea suddenly struck me—Oh, I could shew you the very spot—to forget

forget the distressing vision of my younger days, to renounce the airy phantoms of ambition, and become a quiet peasant.

Dal. What thought honest old Wiedeman to this?

Wel. He shook his head.

Dal. I should have done so, too.

Wel. He thought my intention a mere whim, and that, when the times altered, I should repent my resolution. In vain did I represent to him that he was old, that he wanted a hale son-in-law—

Dal. He shook his head again, I suppose?

Wel. He smiled, wished to convince me I was wrong, and when he found his arguments were ineffectual, he said he would try my resolution for two years. Finding, after the expiration of them, that I thought no more of the court, and that his daughter sincerely loved me, he said: “God bless you!”—and God has blessed us.

Dal. H-m! — Do your children know—

Wel. No.

Dal. But your wife—?

Wel. Nor she. Her father carried the secret with him to the grave. She is happy in her present situation.

Dal. Well, I will say no more to my brothers than is absolutely necessary—Understood? But—

Wel. Another But!

Dal. You injure your son by this connexion.

Wel. How so?

Dal. My daughter has no ancestors.

Wel. And my son is a farmer.

Dal. Well, then—if you be so inclined—

Wel. I am, from my heart.

Dal.

Dal. Let me embrace you, then. I may call you, as hitherto, *friend and neighbour?*

Wel. Most certainly.

Dal. If my good Maria had lived to see this day—or if those above know what passes here below—Understood?

Enter Mrs. Welling and Frederick.

Mrs. Wel. I can restrain him no longer.

Fre. (With eager anxiety.) Well, father! You look kind—so does Mr. Dalner.

Dal. We are agreed.

Fre. Huzza! [*Running away.*]

Wel. Frederick, where are you going?

Fre. To Louisa.

Wel. Hold! Has your mother consented?

Dal. If you have no objection—

Mrs. W. Objection! It makes me shed tears of joy.

Fre. Now I may— [*Is again going.*]

Dal. Stop! Such intelligence as this ought to be conveyed by the father.

Fre. But I may go with you.

Dal. Go you may, but instead of *going* you'll *run*, and I am not in a hurry to provoke the asthma. No, be patient till evening—then I'll bring my daughter hither. Till then, good bye neighbours. [*Exit.*]

Fre. (Following him.) Afternoon, instead of evening.

Mrs. W. He is in love indeed!

Wel. He will be so.

Mrs. W. He is so.

Wel. Impossible, for real love never exists till after marriage. The passion of the youth is
only

only smoke,—but the husband's affection is the pure flame, with which he is warmed even in old age.

Mrs. W. As is our case.

Wel. Yes, good Ann, as is our case. In spite of all our Frederick's warmth, I dare be sworn that I shall be, when sixty years of age, still more in love than he.

Mrs. W. (Smiling.) You in love! With whom?

Wel. Can you ask? (*Affectionately giving his hand*) With you, who have for a quarter of a century been my faithful companion—with you, who have so cheerfully, so excellently adhered to the duties of a wife and mother.

Mrs. W. I have but done my duty.

Wel. And always did it cheerfully.

Mrs. W. God has rewarded me.

Wel. God bless you! Come into my arms!

Mrs. W. Good William!

[*Wel. presses her with emotion in his arms.*]

The curtain falls.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT THE SECOND.

Enter Ernorf, in full dress. His pockets are full of papers—He surveys himself in the glass, and arranges his cravat.

Ern. Now she may decide. If she likes the under-secretary, the man of business—(*Laying his hand on his right coat pocket*) here he is. If she

He likes the poet, the author [*Pointing to his left coat-pocket*] here he is. The right pocket will suit the father and mother—the left the daughters—both will, I think, overpower the Arcadian shepherd, Mr. Lewis.—To-day will I bestow this hand, which has written so many a folio—so many a quarto, on — — Paulina or Rosa? Immaterial.—

Enter Frederick and Rehberg.

Fre. Come in, Sir—we are all happy.

Reh. It is your father's wedding day.

Fre. Oh yes, but other weddings will soon take place.

Ern. (Aside.) Yes, yes, no doubt.

Fre. You shall perform the ceremony—

Reh. For whom?

Fre. (Jocose.) Guests.

Reh. Perhaps, Miss Paulina.

Ern. (Aside.) Perhaps.

Fre. You are wrong.

Reh. (In great agitation.) Or perhaps Miss Rosa?

Ern. (Aside.) Perhaps.

Reh. (Recovering.) Then I know nobody—

Fre. How! Am I nobody?

Reh. You yourself, dear Frederick!

Fre. Yes, I myself, and somebody else too—Louisa Dalner—eh?—What say you now?

Reh. I am really glad to hear it, and as all the family is so happy I cannot suppose that Miss Rosa will attend to her harpsichord to-day.

Fre. I don't know, but I'll call her. [*Exit.*

Reh. Happy man!

Ern. Under the rose, Mr. Rehberg, you will,

will, ere long, have to read the marriage-ceremony for one of his sisters.

Reh. Which?

Ern. That is not yet determined. Cupid gropes in the dark, as at the rape of the Sabines.

Reh. Perhaps you yourself are Cupid.

Ern. (*With self-satisfaction.*) At your service.

Reh. You are about to marry, then?

Ern. Prosaically answered: Yes.

Reh. Marry without affection!

Ern. Who said that? I love—I burn!

Reh. Yet you said you had not made a choice.

Ern. My heart certainly inclines rather towards Paulina.

Reh. Obey the impulse, I beseech you.

Ern. But she wants taste. Her sister is, I think, in many respects superior—and she has so poetical a name—*Rosa*!

Reh. — — You have spoken to Mr. Welling, I presume—?

Ern. Not yet. He is a good honest kind of man. But—(*Looking at his watch.*) it grows late, and I must attend to the duties of my office.

[*Exit*

Reh. This fellow is a silly coxcomb—but can I, for that reason, feel at ease? He is rich, and oh, how many fools, how many villains have I known, who have obtained the most amiable wives because they were rich! I have hitherto been silent, but my intentions are upright—why, therefore, should I be ashamed of declaring them?

Enter Rosa.

Ros. Good morning, Mr. Rehberg, I was almost afraid you would come.

Reh.

Reh. Afraid!

Ros. Because I have been idle. Look, only, what a quantity of dust there is upon the harpsichord.

Reh. That is indeed unusual.

Ros. I have been making a present for my father and mother on their wedding day—

Reh. You have, then, certainly been far better employed than in attending to music.

Ros. Yet I have often been singing; for when I am alone I always sing—and you know my favourite words:

“Why, Fate, dost thou thine ear thus shut,

“And why my supplications mock?—

Reh.

“All I require is but a hut,

“And friend, and little humble flock—

Ros.

“Blest with such gifts, I still should know

“Peace and contentment felt by few,—

Reh.

“Yet how much more my breast would glow,

“If I might share those joys with you.”

Ros. You repeat the last lines as if you were the author of them.

Reh. How if I were?

Ros. (*Jocosely.*) Why then I would ask who it is for whom your breast would glow?

Reh. And I would answer, a cheerful, good, pretty, girl.

Ros. Do I know her?

Reh. Perhaps you do.

Ros. She must live in our village, then, for I have scarcely been half a mile from it.

Reh. Will you say a good word for me?

Ros. Why don't you speak to her yourself?

Reh. I am afraid of displeasing her.

Ros. Well, that is odd. Mr. Ernorf, whom nobody likes, torments every girl in the village with his nonsense, and you, whom we all like—

Reh. Mr. Ernorf is rich—I am poor.

Ros. But a good man without a dollar is preferable to him and all his riches.

Reh. Poverty is oppressive.—

Ros. Without affection it is.

Reh. Are you in earnest, dear Rosa? Would a good man's poverty not deter you from marrying him?

Ros. If I liked him, certainly not.

Reh. You are accustomed to affluence.

Ros. There you are mistaken. My father is, to be sure, reckoned rich—

Reh. He certainly is rich.

Ros. Then he has acted very properly in not letting us discover it. We are as industrious and economical as any peasant's family in the village.

Reh. What you say makes me truly happy.

Ros. Indeed! Why so?

Reh. Because it seems not so difficult to gain your affections as I supposed.

Ros. Does any one wish to gain them?

Reh. (After a pause)

“Blest with such gifts I still should know

“Peace and contentment felt by few,

“Yet how much more my breast would glow,

“Might I but share those joys with you.”

Ros. (Confused.) What do you mean—am I the You?

Reh. Ask your heart.

Ros. My heart is a flatterer.

Reh. Will you share my fate?

Ros. Does that depend on me?

Reh. Will you make me happy?

Ros. Can I?

Ros.

Reh. A poor mother is my only property.

Ros. I should then have two good mothers.

Reh. I live in a small hut.

Ros. Content is not a friend of palaces.

Reh. I live on scanty fare.

Ros. And are healthy with it.

Reh. May I speak to your father?

Ros. (*With downcast eyes.*) My mother must know it, too.

Reh. And if they both consent—

Ros. I must obey.

Reh. Must!

Ros. I will most cheerfully.

Reh. Thanks, good Rosa, you shall not repent it.

Ros. (*Much confused.*) Shall we go to the harpsichord?

Reh. You would learn nothing of me to-day.

Ros. I'll fetch my notes. (*Runs away to conceal her confusion.*)

Reh. Sweet lovely being! What a friendly look will every thing assume, when you come to inhabit my hut? The coughing old servant will no longer awake me, but Rosa's simple song. And my mother—my good mother!—On her too I shall bestow comfort in her latter days.—Oh God! bend the hearts of the parents, that when they find I am honest, they may not ask whether I am rich.

Enter Welling:

Wel. Welcome, Mr. Rehberg. I thank you for your well-meant congratulation.

Reh. It is indeed well-meant, though you have not allowed me time to offer it.

Wel. Sincerity is sparing in words. I hope, therefore, you will be silent, and celebrate this happy day by drinking a glass of wine with me.

Reh. With great pleasure.

Wel. You must play us a good tune,—Rosa shall sing, and we will join in chorus. We will pass the bottle round to the health of every honest man, with a wish that after days of toil he may enjoy such happiness as ours.

Reh. Alas, Mr. Welling! Such happiness is seldom found.

Wel. True, and most seldom among those, who are bred to a profession. You waste your best years in study, and are often at last obliged to be satisfied with a single dish upon your table.

Reh. But the professional man can also feel the charms of love, and sometimes find a girl, who is willing to share his poverty.

Wel. Oh, yes; but the girl is, with your permission, a very silly one.

Reh. (*Starts.*) Such sentiments astonish me from your lips.

Wel. Love is a pretty flower, but it must grow in the shade of a fruitful tree.

Reh. You think, then, that riches only can make the married state happy?

Wel. Heaven forbid that I should have such an idea! There is a pleasant easy track, between the high-road of wealth and the thorny path of penury. I only mean that a man who marries with no other prospect than care and poverty is either very unwise—or very much in love.

Reh. (*Aside.*) Oh, misery! (*aloud*) You would, therefore, not bestow your daughters upon any but men of tolerable means?

Wel.

Wel. I think, at least, that no man of honour would wish to be supported entirely by his wife's means.

Reh. (*Checking his sensibility.*) Such a declaration would silence any one.

Enter Ernorf and Mrs. Welling.

Ern. Have I at last found you, worthy Mr. Welling?

Mrs. W. Mr. Ernorf wishes to have some conversation with you.

Ern. Wishes to unburden his over-loaded heart.

Wel. How happens it that your heart is over-loaded?

Ern. Through the sly manœuvres of the little god who tames the lion—through a wanton frolic of the little urchin, who put into the hands of Hercules the distaff of fair Deianira.

Wel. Mr. Ernorf, your mode of explaining is original but unintelligible.

Reh. I will assist him, Sir. He is in love.

Wel. With one of my daughters?

Reh. (*Laughing.*) With both.

Mrs. W. (*Shaking her head.*) With both!

Ern. Yes. This is a privilege which belongs exclusively to us poets. We may be in love with two or three women at the same time.

Wel. And you wish to marry both?

Ern. My wishes are more limited. If either of the ladies—

Reh. My presence may be unpleasant. Allow me to withdraw.

Wel. For what reason?

Reh.

Reh. (*With a degree of sensibility, but without asperity.*) To make room for a man of property.
[Exit.]

Wel. (*Aside.*) So, so!—Understood, as my friend Dalner would say.

Ern. (*Calling after him.*) Stay! Stay! We shall want a black coat at the wedding.

Wel. Are matters advanced so far?

Ern. They very soon will be. In the first place it is proper that I should ascertain my pedigree. [*Presents a large scroll.*] Here is the testimonial of my matriculations at the university. Here his Highness's appointment of me to my present office.

Wel. We read that in the newspapers.

Ern. Here are some bonds, and—

Wel. Enough, enough, Mr. Ernorf!

Ern. Yes, enough indeed. I flatter myself there are few sons-in-law, who could produce so much.

Wel. The choice of my daughters depends upon their hearts.

Mrs. W. Is it to Paulina or to Rosa that your intentions are directed?

Ern. That I leave entirely to the decision of the lovely creatures, themselves.

Enter Paulina and Rosa.

Wel. 'Tis well. Here come the lovely creatures. Talk to them, yourself; for if I know their dispositions, I may quietly remain a silent spectator.

Mrs. W. Children, Mr. Ernorf wishes to marry one of you.

Paul.

Pau. and Rosa. (Make low curtsies.) He does us great honour.

*[Ernorf returns their compliments
by two low bows.]*

Wel. He thinks you both so amiable, that he finds it impossible to make a choice.

Pau. and Ros. (As above.) He does us great honour.

Mrs. W. And leaves you therefore to decide.

Ros. My sister is the oldest, and has a right to the preference.

Pau. But Rosa excels me in accomplishments.

Ros. Such modesty deserves to be rewarded.

Pau. It is only your modesty, which makes you not feel superior to me.

Ern. Ha! ha! ha! What a noble contest!—I perceive I must advance to the aid of their reserve. *(Solemnly.)* Accept, beauteous Paulina, a heart, which—

Pau. I beg your pardon, Mr. Ernorf, but I accept no present, which I cannot return.

Ern. *[Somewhat confused, but suppressing his mortification.]* Indeed!—Well then, do accept it, fair Rosa—

Ros. Indeed, Mr. Ernorf, I cannot.

Ern. What!—How!—Both!—How am I to understand this?

Mrs. W. My daughters are grateful for the honour you wish to confer upon them.

Pau. and Ros. [Curtsying.] Yes, we are grateful for the honour.

Mrs. W. But do not, as yet, feel inclined to marry.

Ern. (Whose mortification begins to appear, and soon after increases to rage.) Such may be your opinion,

opinion, Mrs. Welling, but you are much mistaken. The ladies had rather be married to-day than to-morrow—yes, rather to-day than to-morrow, I say.

Pau. How do you know that?

Ern. The girls are in love—yes, they are in love, I say.

Ros. You seem to be an interpreter of hearts.

Ern. And a certain stripling in this house, a shallow poetaster is a conqueror of hearts.

Wel. (*Seriously.*) What do you mean, Sir?

Ern. A fellow, of whom we know no more than we do of the wind, where he comes from, or is going to.

Wel. (*Emphatically.*) Mr. Ernorf, I request an explanation.

Ern. You shall have it. I came here to make an explanation. The dapper spark, Lewis, whose release you thought proper to buy of a recruiting party, has, in return, enlisted your daughters.

Mrs. W. Mr. Ernorf, my daughters are virtuous women.

Ern. Virtuous they may be; but they are in love. The whole village, the whole neighbourhood, the whole country talks of it. They are in love with a vagrant, who will be cited to appear before the magistracy, to-morrow, and be sent over the boundaries next day.

Wel. Sir, Can you prove your accusation?

Ern. Pshaw! The world seldom requires proofs. The worse any thing appears to be, the readier it is believed.

Wel. Alas! True.

Ern. I, therefore, advise you as a friend, Mr. Welling,

Welling, and I advise you, Mrs. Welling, to keep a watchful eye upon these two love-sick damsels, and as to the gentle rhymster—to morrow before the magistracy!—*Dixi.* [*Exit.*

[*Paulina and Rosa burst into a fit of laughter.*

Wel. I am not pleased at seeing you laugh.

Pau. Dear father, he is only a fool.

Wel. How often have I told you that fools do more mischief in the world than villains! A villain is generally possessed of sense, and does not deal in defamation, unless he can thereby attain some end, but a fool is continually prating. I, therefore, merely go out of a rascal's road, but I conceal myself from a blockhead. As to what Ernorf said, it cannot be his own invention.

Pau. It is indeed. The whole secret is that Lewis writes better poetry than he does.

Wel. Perhaps I have too much relied upon the idea that fraternal intercourse is seldom dangerous to the heart. Perhaps the young man has really made some impression upon you. (*Surveys them attentively.*) How!—Silent!—Have your parents lost your confidence?

Ros. Oh no!—I really like Lewis very much—but I don't love him.

Wel. And you Paulina?—You cast down your eyes.

Pau. [*Stammering.*] I own, father—that I think Lewis—the most amiable man I ever saw.

Wel. You mean in other words—

Pau. I can't express it by words; but I feel that if I were allowed to love him—[*With a sigh.*] I should love him most ardently.

Wel.

Wel. How long have you known this sensation?

Pau. I almost feel as if I had been born with it.

Wel. Did he himself endeavour to gain your affections?

Pau. Never. You know how reserved and bashful he is.

Mrs. W. So much the more dangerous is he to a woman's heart.

Pau. [*Sighing.*] True, dear mother.

Ros. [*The same.*] Yes, true indeed.

Wel. Do you believe your affection is returned?

Pau. I do.

Mrs. W. Perhaps because you wish it?

Pau. Perhaps.

Wel. I see but two modes of settling this. Lewis must either marry you, or leave the house.

Pau. (*Fearfully.*) Which shall you embrace?

Wel. Let us hear your mother's opinion.

Mrs. W. Well—Lewis is a good young man—

Wel. But poor.

Mrs. W. So were you, my dear William.

Wel. We don't know who he is.

Mrs. W. Nor did we know who you were.

Wel. Yes, yes. Your father knew it.

Mrs. W. I don't know it to this very hour.

Pau. Oh! If I were in twenty-five years to know Lewis as well as you know my father—

Wel. Paulina, I can explain no further, but before Lewis can become my son-in-law, I must learn his fortunes, and must be convinced his conduct has always been as praise-worthy as
since

since he lived with us. Go, Rosa, and call him.

[Exit Rosa.]

Mrs. W. Would you just to day—?

Wel. Instantly, or I should not enjoy the pleasures of to-day.

Mrs. W. Go, then, Paulina, it is not proper that you should be present on this occasion.

Pau. Oh! If it were proper, I am sure I could not stay. [Exit.]

Wel. Lewis is become dear to me by his honesty and diligence—perhaps still more so, by a certain similarity in our fates. If, therefore, I find every thing accordant to my wishes, and you have no objection—

Mrs. W. It would certainly be the best means of silencing the world.

Enter Lewis.

Lew. I understand you want me.

Wel. Did Rosa tell you for what purpose?

Lew. No.

Mrs. W. The Under-Secretary dislikes you.

Lew. Because my verses are liked.

Wel. He insists upon knowing who you are.

Lew. That he will not learn.

Wel. If the Secretary unites with him—

Lew. And you cannot protect me, I will go.

Wel. Will that be so very easy to you?

Lew. No. Very difficult.

Wel. You may avoid it.

Lew. How?

Wel. Tell us your story.

Lew. I cannot.

Wel. You have lived with us two years. I

E

have

have observed you narrowly, and am sure you are incapable of a crime. If you have been guilty of any juvenile indiscretion, avow it.— You know my sentiments.

Lew. My conscience does not accuse me of a crime, or even levity. I am only unfortunate.

Mrs. W. We will assist you in sustaining your misfortunes.

Lew. I must sustain them alone; for if I confess them, I shall be acting against a sacred duty.

Wel. Enough! Let us drop the subject.

Mrs. W. Our intentions were good.

Lew. Oh, you have not confined yourselves to intentions. Your house was my asylum, and the small measure of enjoyment, of which my heart was susceptible, you have bestowed on me.

Wel. We would willingly double it by reconciling you to your fate.

Lew. Let me then dwell in private as hitherto. Do not, do not rob me of the bliss I feel in calling you my parents.

Wel. I would not do it for my own sake, were I not compelled to it. When you entered my house, my daughters were still almost children, and we thought not that your presence would ever injure their reputation.

Lew. You alarm me.

Mrs. W. Do you now perceive why it was necessary we should speak to you?

Lew. Oh God! yes.

Wel. If you be such a man as I have fancied you, I may at once declare, that not only the reputation, but the peace of one of my daughters depends on your departure.

Lew. (*After a pause.*) I will go.

Wel.

Wel. I acted imprudently in having desired Paulina to consider you as her brother, and in having been silent while her attachment increased.

Lew. Oh! I would fall at your feet, and say—"Consider not my poverty, but look at my heart, and let me marry your Paulina,"—but—

Wel. You do not love her?

Lew. I love her from my soul.

Wel. And yet—?

Lew. (*After a pause.*) I am already married.

Mrs. W. Married!

Wel. And have forsaken your wife?

Lew. Condemn me not.

Mrs. W. (*Shaking her head.*) Such conduct, Lewis—

Wel. Do not reproach him, Ann. If he be guilty, he bears a judge within himself, before whom he cannot be a hypocrite.

Lew. Oh! you will send me away far poorer than I was when I came, if my confession has robbed me of your regard.

Wel. I do not decide upon it. Two years of upright conduct are to be placed in competition with this apparently bad action and—I do not decide. But my duty as a father commands me seriously to repeat, that your presence disturbs the tranquility of my family.

Lew. Shall I depart to-day—immediately?

Wel. (*After a moment's consideration.*) It will hurt me not to see you sitting to-night among my children—but—act as you think I have deserved. [Exit.

Lew. Oh! Allow me to remain one hour.

Mrs. W. Yes, Lewis he did not mean it in that light. Stay 'till morning. *Lew.*

Lew. I will creep into some corner, and not disturb your happiness—

Mrs. W. Oh that this should just happen to-day!

Lew. Let me but wander once more through the house and garden. When the guests come, I will steal away.

Mrs. W. Not without taking leave?

Lew. I cannot take leave of you.

Mrs. W. Lewis do you think we wish to turn you out of doors like a dishonest servant? Despair shall not force you to enlist again. I know my husband. He parts with you because he feels he *must*; but he will not abandon you—I will not abandon you. What he will do for you I don't know, but—(*Secretly draws from her pocket a small leather purse,*) for my part, my love and blessing shall be a substitute for what is wanting—in the amount. [*Puts the purse into his hand, wipes her eyes, and exit hastily.*]

Lew. (*After a pause, during which he mournfully surveys the purse.*) Wretched outcast that I am! Have I at length found a mother, only to be doomed doubly to feel the loss of her? Have I gained a lovely girl's affections, only to make my chains the heavier? [*He stands in an attitude of deep reflection and despondency.*]

Enter Paulina.

Pau. (*Softly steals behind him, and puts her hands upon his eyes.*) Guess who it is. (*Draws her hands back with sudden alarm, and looks at them.*) What does this mean? Your eyes are full of tears.

Lew. You should not have seen them.

Pau.

Pau. Why are you in tears?

Lew. They are the lot of humanity.

Pau. What is the matter? What has happened? What have you to do with my mother's purse?

Lew. (*After a pause.*) It contains money to defray the expences of my journey.

Pau. (*Terrified.*) Are you going to leave us?

Lew. I must.

Pau. Where are you going?

Lew. Any where. The further, the better.

Pau. Have you, then, staid too long with us?

Lew. Much too long.

Pau. (*With a sigh.*) I almost think so, myself.

Lew. (*Gives her his hand.*) You have always been kind and affectionate towards me.

Pau. (*With innocence and fervour.*) I am so still. (*Somewhat confused.*) My father—wanted to speak to you.

Lew. He has done it.

Pau. And does he approve of your intention?

Lew. I go by his desire.

Pau. Your answers are enigmas.

Lew. My whole being is an enigma, which death alone can solve. Farewell, Paulina—do not forget me. I have loved all this family—but you particularly. Wherever I go, your image will accompany me. When you sit under the great lime-tree—think sometimes of me.

Pau. Lewis!

Lew. Remember me to the old woman, who used to receive your charities through me.

Pau. (*Bursts into tears.*) Lewis, what does this mean? If you love me—

Lew. My affection for you is a crime,—my heart is sinning against a hateful duty.

Pau. Oh! Speak more plainly I beseech you.

Lew. Yes, good Paulina, you shall not learn from another what separates us. It is hard to tell you—but tell you I *must*, that—I am married.

Pau. (*Almost shrieking.*) Married!—That is not true.

Lew. Would to God it were not!

Pau. Married!—Oh, Lewis! Why did you conceal it?

Lew. Do not hate me.

Pau. Go, go to your wife, and tell her you have robbed Paulina of her peace for ever. [*Covers her face with both hands, and rushes out.*]

Lew. Paulina! Is that your farewell? [*Strikes his forehead, and rests his head against the wall.*]

The curtain falls.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE,—*A Wood.*

Count Lohrstein is discovered in the back-ground, sleeping under a tree—at his head lies a casket. Francis and Jacob are in conversation towards the front of the stage.

Fra. He is asleep. What think you Jacob?
Do

Do you choose to follow him through woods and bogs any longer? It's a strange kind of inclination.

Jac. (*Scratching his head.*) It's not exactly inclination.

Fra. Why, a dog leads a better life.

Jac. But our master himself fares no better.

Fra. The cook was the wisest of us, for he ran away when he had only travelled one stage.

Jac. The Count smiled at that; but last night when his *valet* disappeared, on whom he placed such firm reliance—

Fra. Yes, yes—no doubt he took some valuable effects with him. My advice is, Jacob, that we do the same.

Jac. What! Leave the old gentleman quite alone!

Fra. Why, he must dismiss us in a day or two, for how can he support us?

Jac. That's true, to be sure.

Fra. And how long shall we be able to endure such a life as this? We have passed six nights in the open air. If we espy a chimney, we leave it a quarter of a mile on one side. We buy our coarse bread at solitary shepherd's huts, and have nothing to drink but water from the springs we meet with.

Jac. But we have known better days in his service.

Fra. Was it our fault that there was an end to those days? Who knows what crime he has committed? The prince would scarcely send hussars in pursuit of him for nothing.

Jac. Damn those fellows! They nearly caught us once or twice.

Fra.

Pra. And if they should catch us, we may perhaps be doomed to keep our master company in prison.

Jac. But we must be near the borders now.

Fra. Well—can't the hussars ride over the borders?—Besides we are now in a worse situation than ever. Our horses are so tired that we shall be obliged to leave them, and if we be seen creeping through the thickets, we may be mistaken for robbers, and shot.

Jac. Hang it, Francis, you frighten me.

Fra. Therefore, I say, let us be off before he awakes. Believe me, we shall be doing him a kindness.

Jac. If I thought so—

Fra. He won't dismiss us, and he can't pay us. But if, when he awakes, he finds we have decamped, he'll be heartily glad to have got rid of us.

Jac. (*Casting a glance towards the Count.*) See! He begins to move.

Fra. Let us lose no more time. Does he owe you any wages?

Jac. Yes, for a couple of months.

Fra. And me for a quarter of a year. We can't afford to make him a present of that. In the casket, there, he has several trinkets, rings, and so forth.

Jac. Surely you would not take them?

Fra. Blockhead! Why not?

Jac. What! Rob him?

Fra. Doesn't he owe us money?

Jac. But not so much.

Fra. Pshaw! Who knows what the baubles are worth? We can sell them at the first place

we

we come to, and if they produce more than is due to us, we can send it to him by the post.

Jac. Why, yes, if that can be done—

Fra. Follow that foot-path. I'll be with you in a minute.

Jac. Good old master! I pity him, nevertheless. *[Exit.*

Fra. *(Walks gently to the Count, takes the castet, and then returns on tip-toe. When arrived at some yards distance, he bows sarcastically.)* Good bye to your excellency! Your lordship will now not be over-burdened. *[Exit.*

Loh. *(Tormented by frightful dreams.)* Oh! not into this subterraneous dungeon.—Give me air!—Give me air! *(Awakes.)* Where am I?—*(Raises himself.)* Heaven be praised, not yet in the hands of my persecutors,—not yet in the power of the most abandoned of women.—Alas! My sleep has not refreshed me. The rain has drenched my clothes. I must hasten towards the borders, that I may at least find a house, where I may die. *(Raises himself with difficulty.)* Perhaps my people have, meanwhile, discovered a safe path. *(Calls.)* Francis! Jacob! The honest fellows are endeavouring to find the shortest road through the thickets. Francis! Jacob!—Yet I ordered them not to go far. Where can they be? My strength is exhausted, and I am no longer able to call. *[Exerting himself.]* Francis! Jacob!—What can this mean?—No answer!—Can they—impossible!—*[Draws out a little whistle, gives a signal towards different quarters, and listens for a reply.]* Not yet?—Can they too have forsaken me?—Must I then despair of finding honesty among mankind?—*[His*

[*His casket suddenly occurs to him—he looks at the place where it lay, and strikes his forehead.*] Yes. 'Tis true. Forsaken and robbed!—They have deprived me of my last resource. [*Rivets his eyes on the earth—a pause—*] Here do I stand—I who, but ten days ago, possessed half a million—and have not now a morsel of bread to share with my dog—[*Looks hastily around.*] Sultan! Sultan!—Alas! My dog too has forsaken me. [*A pause of dreadful anguish.*] — — God protect me from insanity! I'll tear a bough from yonder tree, and wander through the wood—then, if I hunger, I must gnaw the bark from my staff. — — — Yes, they have plundered me, and stolen from my heart all confidence in God or man. [*Feels his pockets.*] Nothing, nothing have they left me. (*Stops suddenly.*)—Yes, yes—they have. One friend I still possess.—[*Draws out a pistol.*] Welcome thou friend in need, thou last resource of a despairing man! [*A pause.*] Answer me, Philosophy, thou sweet companion of my better days, thou phantom of my brain—I am now in earnest—Answer me. May that man, who has been hurled from the pinnacle of greatness into the gulph of misery, who has been sold by a faithless wife, and whom each step conducts to an eternal prison—May that man, who has no child, no friend, no hope—[*Puts the pistol to his forehead.*]

Enter Dalner.

Dal. [*As he is passing, hears part of the above soliloquy, rushes towards the Count, and wrenches the pistol from his hand.*] Hold!—Zounds! That must not be. An old man too! How short a
time

time will it be ere Death of his own accord will summon you ?

Loh. Oh, that he would !

Dal. This trigger is soon pulled, but how do you expect to be received above ?—Understood ?

Loh. Oh, my friend ! Your intentions are, doubtless, good, but a man in despair has no ear for your cool precepts.

Dal. Why, you are right, there, to be sure. But can I help you, eh ?

Loh. I am a wretched fugitive, pursued by enemies, and forsaken by every friend.

Dal. Him !—I could ask why, but there is no time for that, just now. If, therefore, I can be of any assistance to you, I will, with all my heart.

Loh. Are we far from the borders ?

Dal. A hundred yards, perhaps,

Loh. Oh tell me instantly—to the right or left ?

Dal. Where you see a little bridge over the stream, yonder. But which way are you going ?

Loh. Any way. I only wish to find a hovel or barn, where I can rest till morning, for I have slept six nights beneath the canopy of heaven.

Dal. Do you suppose, then, we have no beds, eh ?

Loh. I have been robbed, and can only pay with gratitude.

Dal. I'll take you to a house, where that coin is always current. At night you shall come home with me, but at present we'll go to a cottage hard by, for you seem in want of refreshment.

Loh.

Loh. Generous man, who are you?

Dal. Henry Dalner, Chief Forester of this district—but that's of no consequence—understood? I'll take you to an old farmer who is celebrating his twenty-sixth wedding-day.

Loh. [*Uneasy.*] I wish we were beyond the borders.

Dal. Farmer Welling lives just on the other side of them. Oh! there comes his son. He'll soon be *my* son too. Understood?

Enter Frederick.

Fre. Well, father, where's Louisa?

Dal. She is staying to nurse her old aunt, and can't come till evening.

Fre. But couldn't the maid have nursed the old aunt?

Dal. That old aunt acted as a mother to Louisa, and never entrusted her education to the maid.

Fre. I came to meet you in such spirits—

Dal. You shall not have come in vain, for though you don't find Louisa, you find an opportunity of doing good. Here is a poor man, whom I have promised to take with me, and I hope you will receive my guest kindly.

Fre. Of course. If he be unfortunate, he needs no recommendation.

Dal. Look in good humour, then.

Fre. How can I when Louisa is not at home?
[*To the Count*] Don't mind my countenance, Sir. At night when Louisa is with me, you'll see me in spirits.

Dal. Come, then—

Loh.

Loh. (*Exhausted.*) Good man, lend me your stick.

Dul. Pshaw! As long as I have an arm, why should I lend my stick. Understood?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE,—*Welling's House.*

Mrs. Welling is discovered at her needle-work.

Welling brings Lewis in.

Wel. I have brought a man, whom I surprised, as he was endeavouring to escape through the back door, without having taken leave.

Mrs. W. Indeed! would he not even accept this linen which I have been selecting for him?

Lew. You have already given me so much—

Mrs. W. Pft!

Lew. And my father has been so generous.

Wel. Silence! I did not bring you hither to hear myself praised.

Lew. Oh! how painful do I find it to bid you farewell!—I had rather forsake the world than this house.

Wel. We are travellers, whose journey has hitherto been the same way; but we have now reached the cross road, and must part.

Lew. Adieu, then, father—adieu, good mother. Wherever my road may conduct me, it will never lead to ingratitude. Words fail me at this bitter hour—God sees my heart—and you, my tears.

Wel. (*Much affected*) A father's benediction be upon thee, youth! may'st thou, like me, at length enjoy the blessings of affec-tion, industry, and health, and thank Providence for having,
F by

by early sufferings, enhanced the value of your later bliss.

Mrs. W. Let us often hear where you are, and how you do.

Wel. And, Lewis, if you should ever be in want of any thing—you have given me your promise?

Lew. You have taught me to work.

Mrs. W. But you may fall sick.

Lew. (*With a look towards Heaven, expressive of his wishes.*) And die.

Mrs. W. You break my heart.

Wel. Go, my son. It is time that we should part. [*Lewis is going.*]

Mrs. W. [*Follows and embraces him.*] Alas! It was thus I felt when my eldest boy died—His name was Lewis, too—I have lost him—who knows whether I shall ever see you again?

Wel. Let him go, good Ann. He has enough to bear.

Lew. [*Scarcely able to speak.*] Father, grant me my last request.

Wel. Willingly, my son.

Lew. Let me see Paulina once again.

Wel. Would you add to the horrors of the separation?

Lew. Oh, let me see her once again.

Wel. [*To Mrs. W.*] Where is she?

Mrs. W. In her own room.

Wel. Let her come.

Mrs. W. [*Goes to the door and opens it.*] Paulina! Lewis is here, and wishes to bid you farewell.

Enter

Enter Paulina.

[*Her eyes are red with weeping—She gives Lewis her hand.—They stand opposite each other silent and trembling. A long pause.*]

Wel. [With great emotion.] Embrace each other, children.

[*Lewis and Paulina embrace. Paulina walks sobbing to her chamber, and Lewis rushes out.*]

Mrs. W. (Following him.) Lewis—the linen! [Exit.

Wel. Short-sighted mortals! Thus you often do harm, while striving to do good. Had I left this poor youth to his fate, perhaps, ere now, some cannon-ball might have swept him from the world. He would then have been happy. Well, be this as it may, I will not cease to do what conviction tells me is right.

Enter Rosa.

Ros. Father, Lewis is gone.

Wel. I know it.

Ros. I heard him sob, as he disappeared behind the hedge.

Wel. God be with him!

Ros. My mother is in tears.

Wel. Go, and console her.

Ros. I shall only weep with her.

Wel. Go, then, to your sister.

Ros. Father, you are, in general, so good—tell me—why may not Paulina marry him?

Wel. Because he is already married.

Ros. Already married!—Then, she must submit to her fate.

Wel. She will, I am sure.

Ros. And is that the only reason why Lewis is obliged to leave us ?

Wel. It is.

Ros. Not because he is poor ?

Wel. By no means.

Ros. [*Timidly advancing towards her object.*] You would have let him marry Paulina, in spite of his poverty ?

Wel. I would !

Ros. And if I were—to like a man—who was not married—but poor—

Wel. If he were honest and industrious—

Ros. (*Eagerly.*) That he is.

Wel. Who ?

Ros. [*Much confused.*] I mean—but you are not angry, dear father ?

Wel. At what ?

Ros. I would have told you it sooner—but I only learnt it myself an hour or two ago.

Wel. What ?

Ros. That I—that I love Mr. Rehberg.

Wel. Indeed ! And how did you learn it ?

Ros. He asked me about it.

Wel. And you, with your usual openness—

Ros. I referred him to you.

Wel. He has not mentioned the subject to me.

Ros. Oh, he durst not. You frightened him.

Wel. I !

Ros. You railed against the poverty of professional men.

Wel. Hence, then, the sensibility which I remarked.

Ros. But I am certain he misunderstood you. Honesty and industry are all the qualifications my father requires.

Wel.

Wel. But, as I told him, the industry of a professional man will not always support a family. You are but sixteen years of age, and can wait.

Ros. For Rehberg!

Wel. Why not? If in a few years he should obtain a moderate living, and his sentiments, as well as your's, remain the same—

Ros. Oh! There is no doubt of that.

Wel. Why, then, we can talk further on the subject.

Ros. But now? What shall I say to him?

Wel. Nothing.

Ros. But he is walking so sorrowfully in the garden.

Wel. Go, then, and send him hither.

Ros. (*Stroking his cheek.*) Dear father!

Wel. What now?

Ros. Talk kindly to him.

Wel. I almost think I see a tear in your eye.

Ros. I love him so sincerely. [*Exit.*]

Wel. [*Alone.*] Rehberg is a sensible man, and that is all I know of him. But who can decide whether poverty or affection be the mother of his wishes?—Wretched indeed would be my Rosa, if she borrowed charms from her father's coffers.

Enter Rehberg.

Reh. (*With reserve.*) Rosa has just told me—

Wel. (*Half joking, half in earnest.*) My dear Sir, she has told you many things too soon, and I must own I had rather have heard from you, what she has just confessed to me.

Reh. Appearances are against me.

Wel. Yet good news is welcome from any one.

Reh. How happy should I be, if I could think you serious!

Wel. Can I make a joke of my daughter's happiness? When I tell you that I have observed qualities in you which claim my respect, I speak the truth.

Reh. The respect of a worthy man satisfies my ambition, but not my heart.

Wel. (*After a pause.*) Our relative situations give me a right to be candid with you.

Reh. I shall evade no question you may please to ask.

Wel. You have enemies.

Reh. That is a compliment to me.

Wel. How so?

Reh. He who injures no man, and yet has enemies, cannot be a common kind of man.

Wel. The Secretary's house is not in the best repute. You are often there.

Reh. Because I give lessons in music there, as well as here.

Wel. It is said you admire one of his daughters.

Reh. I have heard as much.

Wel. And do not cease your visits?

Reh. No. Because there no regard is paid to so absurd a report, and I myself cannot afford to renounce the profits of my attendance.

Wel. Why not?—Forgive me if I seem too forward. You are a single man.

Reh. I have a poor mother.— [*A pause.*]

Wel. But it is said you play—and play for large sums.

Reh. To this assertion I shall answer with a mere No.

Wel.

Wel. You do not play?

Reh. I have once or twice taken the cards of another when called away—I myself never play.

Wel. You had, as I am told, a good library?

Reh. I had.

Wel. You sold it?

Reh. (*With a sigh.*) I did.

Wel. I have heard that the money you obtained for it was lost at the Secretary's card-table.

Reh. That is an infamous falsehood.

Wel. I guess—your poor mother—

Reh. (*Confused.*) No. (*After a pause.*) 'Tis well. I will not conceal from you even this circumstance, but I beg you to believe that nothing but my present situation should induce me to disclose it. I am of low origin, and my father was seized with the pious whim of making me a clergyman, without being able to bestow any thing on my education. My humble talents, however, procured me a patron, who was in easy circumstances, and who defrayed the expences of my studies. To him I was obliged for every thing; and the library, you have mentioned, was his present. About a year ago, this worthy man was plundered by the French, and obliged in his age to become a beggar. It was then I sold my books.

Wel. And sent him the money?

Reh. I could do no more for him.

Wel. I know enough, and as you are not satisfied with my respect [*offers his hand*] accept my admiration—regard—affection—

Reh. [*With warmth.*] Will you be my father?

Wel. Good Rehberg! You consider not what weighty duties already rest on you. A poor mother—

ther—a poor benefactor—and a wife too—children— — — or do you calculate on my daughter's fortune?

Reh. No.

Wel. Perhaps you have prospects at our vicar's death?

Reh. None. I had prospects elsewhere, but within an hour my hopes from that quarter have been destroyed, and had I sooner received the intelligence I would have been silent.

Wel. Explain yourself.

Reh. I had succeeded in interesting some men of consequence for me at the neighbouring court!

Wel. [*Starts.*] At the neighbouring court!

Reh. A pamphlet, in which at least my patriotic zeal was evident, excited the attention of the minister.

Wel. [*Confused and agitated.*] The minister. Oh, I know him.

Reh. He is a man of great influence—

Wel. Certainly.

Reh. He has large estates—

Wel. True—he has—confiscated estates.

Reh. Among others, the living of Birkendorf is in his gift.

Wel. [*Aside.*] Birkendorf! Oh God!

Reh. This living was described to me as a very profitable one, and the place as comfortable and retired.

Wel. [*Suppressing his agitation.*] Oh! 'Tis a sweet place—I was once there.—Well? You received a promise—?

Reh. And I was almost certain of success.

Wel.

Wel. And were, nevertheless, disappointed?
By what means?

Reh. Of that I am ignorant. A letter, which I received about an hour ago, briefly states that unexpected circumstances have taken place, which deprive me of all hope at present.

Wel. I am sorry, good Rehberg, I am sorry that I cannot make you vicar of Birkendorf, but it really is not in my power.

Reh. [*Somewhat surprised.*] That I know.

Wel. Yet—if you have resolution enough to wait—you shall have Rosa.

Reh. [*Enraptured.*] Thanks, dearest Sir! I care not how rough the path, if *she* be the object, to which it leads.

Wel. I should have liked to have visited you at Birkendorf very much—oh very much.

Enter Mrs. Welling.

Mrs. W. My dear William, our neighbour Dalner is bringing another guest with him.

Wel. Whom?

Mrs. W. Frederick says he found him in the wood.

Wel. I don't like strangers.

Mrs. W. A poor man in distress—

Wel. Then he is welcome. I should ill deserve my present happiness, were I on such a day as this to send a fellow-creature in distress from my door.

Mrs. W. Poor Lewis!

Wel. We have lost a son in him—but here stands a man, who will supply his place.

Mrs. W. (*With formal civility.*) Indeed!

Wel.

Wel. Come, come, Ann. I have proved him, and will be surety for him.

Mrs. W. You !

Wel. The reports you heard are false.

Mrs. W. I am glad they are.

Wel. Pshaw, wife ! You don't speak from your heart.

Mrs. W. (*With warmth.*) Indeed I am glad.

Wel. He is a good son, and a grateful man.

Reh. [*With diffidence.*] Dear Mr. Welling !

Wel. You know, Ann, that I only give this time to those who remain so longer than the kindness itself endures, and whose gratitude is not like a crayon picture, which every year loses a portion of its colours. Such men are rare, and he is one of them.

Mrs. W. I am ashamed of having done him an injustice.

Wel. Embrace him, then, as your future son-in-law.

Mrs. W. With all my heart ! [*She does it.*]

Wel. That is, as soon as he obtains a living, which will banish all cares for subsistence. Instil this idea into Rosa's mind, and tell her to be patient.

Mrs. W. But, my dear husband, why delay their happiness ? With our fortune—

Wel. You know my sentiments. A good wife is so great a treasure, that I am not at all surpris'd when I read of nations, who receive money from the bridegroom, when they bestow a daughter upon him. A girl ought to have no dowry but beauty and virtue. Thus thought your father—thus think I.

Reh. Who would not think such a dowry sufficient ?

Enter

Enter Mr. Dalner, Count Lohrstein, and Frederick.

Fre. Father, Louisa is not come.

Dal. With your permission, neighbour, I'll introduce a stranger.

[Welling gazes full at the Count.]

Loh. Encouraged by this worthy man I have ventured to intrude upon you.

[Welling, without making any reply, surveys him with close attention.]

Mrs. W. You are sincerely welcome.

Loh. If misfortunes give me any claim on your compassion—

Dal. *[Whispering to Welling, who stands like a statue.]* Speak a kind word, or two. He is a poor fellow, whom Fate seems to have dealt hardly by. I found him in the wood just when he was going—*[Imitates the action of holding the pistol to his head.]* Understood?

Wel. *[Recovering.]* I—Sir—I rejoice—consider my house as your own—and, if you are in search of an asylum—you have found it.

Loh. I thank you. That is the first word of consolation I have heard after six days of horror. Am I over the borders, here?

Wel. *[Always agitated.]* You are.

Loh. In safety, then?

Wel. Perfectly.

Loh. And if my pursuers were even to force their way hither—

Wel. Here dwells no traitor.

Loh. Your hand, honest old man!—*[Welling gives it].* The trembling of it might make me suspicious—

Dal.

Dal. Never fear, Sir. This man's promise, with a shake of the hand, is as safe as a bond with a dozen seals to it.

Wel. [*In a broken voice.*] My wife—and my children—will take care—that you want nothing I myself—forgive me—I must leave you for a few moments.

Mrs W. [*Alarmed.*] What is the matter, dear William?

Dal. Neighbour, you grow pale.

Wel. I am not well. [*Frederick and Mrs. Welling run to him.*]

Fre. Father!

Mrs. W. For Heaven's sake—

Wel. Let me go—it will soon be over—I'll step into my chamber—stay—stay—I wish to be alone. [*Reels a few steps,—then supports himself on a chair, which stands near him.*—I cannot—Frederick—assist me.—[*Frederick runs and conducts him to the chamber.*]

Mrs. W. Heavens! What is this?

Dal. A serious accident. [*To Rehberg.*] Something like an apoplectic fit.

[*Welling having reached the door, is unable any longer to keep his feet, and sinks into the arms of his son.*]

Mrs. W. [*Shrieks.*] He is dying! He is dying!

[*Dalner and Rehberg hasten to his assistance.*]

Reh. Heaven forbid!

Dal. Put him to bed directly.

[*They carry him in.*]

Loh. (*Alone.*) Of all my followers, none has remained with me but misery. Am I then doomed to bring sorrow into this peaceful hut too?

Mrs. W.

Mrs. W. [*Rushes from her chamber.*] Paulina! Rosa! Your father— [*Runs back.*

Pau. [*Without.*] What is the matter?

Fre. [*Meeting her.*] My father is ill. We must send for a surgeon directly. [*Runs out.*

Pau. [*Without paying any attention to the stranger.*] Heavens! So suddenly!

[*Runs into the chamber.*

Ros. [*Without.*] My father! My father!

[*Rushes shrieking across the stage into the chamber.*

Fre. [*Returning,—as he crosses the stage.*] Oh God! Help us! Help us! [*Runs in.*

Loh. [*Alone.*] Oh that I could die thus! Oh that I had children, who thus loved me!

Mrs. W. [*With Paulina.*] There's the key—in the little cupboard—on the right—a brown vial—or on the left—or right—oh, I don't know. [*Returns.*] Paulina runs out.

Loh. [*Alone and deeply moved.*] I thank thee, God!—I still can feel for other's woes.

[*Paulina crosses the stage with the vial in her hand, and sobbing violently.*

Loh. (*Alone.*) What was my rank—my splendid station? What has my life been, compared with this man's death?

Dal. (*Gently pushing Mrs. W. and her daughters out of the chamber.*) Pshaw! Your groans and cries only make the evil the greater. Pray stay here. Nothing shall be neglected.

(*Returns.*

Mr W. (*Transported beyond herself.*) Heavens! After living twenty-five years with him, must I leave him at his dying hour?

Pau. Mother, he will not die.

Ros. Oh no, no! He will not die.

Mrs. W. Let me go to fulfil my duty. When you were born, Paulina, and I was dangerously ill, your father never left my side.—Shall I then leave him in the hands of strangers?

Reh. (*Opens the door.*) Be quiet: He recovers:

Ros. Did you hear that, mother? He recovers:

Pau. (*Falling on Mrs. Welling's neck.*) Mother! Mother! Rejoice! Heaven will restore him to us.

Mrs. W. Is it then true? Oh yes! It must be true. God will not separate two such loving hearts. Come children, kneel, and pray with me for your father's recovery.

[*Sinks on her knees. Paulina and Rosa kneel on each side of her. All raise their hands towards Heaven, and pray.*]

Fre. (*From the chamber.*) Joy! Mother! My father is come to himself again.

Mrs. W. (*Stretches her arms towards him—He raises her.*) Frederick, I thought I had blessed you as far as I was able—I was mistaken—Heaven blest you a thousand times for this intelligence!

Pau. (*Hanging on him.*) Are you sure of it, brother?

Ras. (*The same.*) Is all the danger over?

Fre. I believe it is. He can stand again. He is only rather weak, and has just drank a glass of wine.

Mrs. W. May I, then, go to him? (*In a tone of intreaty.*) Yes, yes. Let me go to him;

Fre.

Fre. Good mother, this has affected you very much. Come h. I'll support you.

Mrs. W. I have him again. Oh God! Forgive me—as yet I cannot thank thee.

[Goes slowly towards the chamber supported by Frederick. The door opens.]

Fre. See! There he is!

[Welling appears at the door, leaning on Dalner and Rehberg.]

Mrs. W. *(Flies into his arms.)* My husband!

[The three children kneel round him, the Count stands in a corner, and casts a look of bitter sorrow on the group.]

The curtain falls.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.



ACT THE FOURTH.

Welling is discovered, sitting in the middle of the stage, surrounded by his wife and children. On each side of him stand Dalner and Rehberg—the Count is more towards the front of the stage.

Wel. Good Ann, be at ease. It is over.

Mrs. W. Won't you put on your bed-gown?

Pau. I'll go for it.

Res. I'll fetch your slippers.

Wel. Will you, then, make me ill by compulsion? I tell you I am well. Give me a glass of wine. That is all I want.

[Mrs. Wel. and her daughters run to the door.]

Wel. Hold! Why, you need not all go for it.

Pau. I was the first.

Ros. No—I was.

Pau. No—I was.

Mrs. W. And I am your mother. Where are the keys?

Wel. You know, Ann, I don't like you any longer to fatigue yourself by going to the cellar.

Pau. There—you hear, mother—I am to go.

Ros. No, it is my week.

Pau. You have nothing to do with the cellar. Your week only relates to the kitchen.

Ros. But I love my father as much as you do.

Wel. Children, at this rate, I shall not have any thing. I love you both. Go, both of you.

[They run out.]

Dal. Neighbour, I am thinking that what is passing round you must revive you more than wine. Understood?

Wel. True. If there be any medicine, which can promote long life, it must be affection.

Re-enter Paulina and Rosa.

One brings a bottle—the other a silver goblet.

Pau. Number 4.

Ros. With a black seal.

Pau. There is Hochheim upon it.

Ros. And 1776.

Wel. (Drinks and says to Rosa) Fill it. (She obeys—he turns to the Count.) Sir, I am sorry that, added to your own misfortunes, you have been obliged to witness the distress of others. (Raises the goblet.) According to the ancient custom of our country I sincerely bid you welcome.

[Paulina

[Paulina takes the goblet and delivers it to the Count with a curtsey.]

Loh. (Empties it.) To the health of my worthy host!—Now, Sir, if you really remain true to the customs of our forefathers, I am secure in your house, for we have drank from the same goblet.

Wel. Here lurks no traitor.

Dal. Spies gain nothing here:

Fre. But a drubbing.

Reh. And contempt.

Mrs. W. If you be weary, Sir, I'll conduct you to a retired chamber.

Pau. You shall sleep on linen, which we weave ourselves.

Ros. And feathers of our own geese.

Loh. Heaven be praised that I again find myself among men! All I see and hear inspires confidence. I should like, good old man, to have a little conversation with you in private.

Wel. With all my heart! My friends, and children, you will find employment enough, if you will go into the court, and assist in the preparations for our little country feast.

Dal. I sent you a few poles for the occasion, from the forest.

Pau. And I made the garlands for them

[Exeunt Dal. and Pau.]

Ros. Mr. Rehberg will teach us a chorus, in the mean time.

Reh. With all my heart. *[Exeunt Ros. and Reh.]*

Fre. I can't sing, but I can join with my violin. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. W. You'll not be long before you follow us?

Wel. As soon as possible. *[Exit Mrs. W.]*

Loh. Generous man, it is my duty to make a discovery of my rank and situation to you, that you may know you are not harbouring a criminal.

Wel. Of a crime, I hold Count Lohrstein to be incapable.

Loh. *(Alarmed.)* How! You know me.

Wel. *(Steadfastly.)* Yes, Count, business has sometimes carried me to your Prince's residence, where I have seen you.

Loh. Then you are probably not ignorant what rank and honours I possessed but a few days since?

Wel. You were your Prince's all-powerful minister.

Loh. In reality, an office but ill adapted to my inclination. Alas! There was a time, when domestic felicity, in the arms of my first consort, left me no other wish—She died—I forsook my solitary country dwelling, rushed into the whirlpool of the city to dissipate my grief and to seek another affectionate heart; instead of which I found a deceitful and ambitious woman, who from an admirer of a country life transformed me into a courtier, and used me as the tool of her designs.

Wel. I know the Countess, too.

Loh. By situations for ever new and intricate she kept me remote from nature and affection. By inexhaustible intrigues and plots, she, for a train of years, bound to our house the favour of the court, till the old prince, feeling the approach of death—

Wel. *(In involuntary agitation.)* He died?

Loh. Some months previous to his dissolution.

my

my wife, in combination with an abandoned daughter-in-law, engendered new plans. She knew the hereditary prince disliked me, and that his father's death would be the signal for my dismissal; but she also knew the connection which subsisted between the young prince and my daughter-in-law. With her, therefore, she began to cabal, finding she could no longer maintain her station by her own devices. Two furies suppressed the hatred which had endured for years, and the snakes from their hair were intertwined. (*Overpowered with agony.*) Oh!

Wel. It is to your praise, my Lord, that you were not invited to share in this coalition.

Loh. I was. I had been persuaded to so many things—had so often despotically forced my heart to silence, that, on this occasion too, they thought their game an easy one. Yet, although I had breathed none but court-air for seven-and-twenty years, I found it impossible to cringe to a woman, who had plunged my son into misery, and branded my name with infamy. I was not even able to suppress some severe remarks occasioned by the abandoned life of my daughter-in-law. She thirsted for revenge, and my wife prudently took the stronger side. The prince died—

Wel. (*With an involuntary sigh.*) He was a good man, and not formed for the intrigues of a court.

Loh. (*Astonished.*) Your opinion is just. How happens it that you—

Wel. (*Interrupting him.*) It was not exactly my opinion. Proceed, my Lord.

Loh. I was prepared to receive my dismissal, but not to give account of every weakness, which might

might be laid to my charge during the twenty-seven years of my administration,—of every injustice, perhaps, to which at the pressing indignation of my wife and her adherents, I had now and then been led. I was not prepared against proofs which my wife had stolen from my cabinet, and lodged in the hands of my enemies. Her reward was the permission to remain at court, and wander like the ghost of her former greatness, while I was doomed to perpetual imprisonment.

Wel. Which you escaped by flight?

Loh. Forsaken by all, who had been obliged to me for their situations, I was apprized of the impending danger by an old man, for whom I had done nothing—whom I had always considered as a cypher. Heaven's blessings be shed on honest Zahn!

Wel. (*Starts.*) Zahn!

Loh. At the peril of losing his scanty subsistence, he forced his way at midnight to my chamber. "My Lord," said he, "I am under no obligation to you, and I do not like you; but you are about to be ill-treated. Fly, or at break of day you will be imprisoned in the castle."

Wel. (*Aside.*) Such conduct is what I should expect of honest Zahn.

Loh. I fled,—and was pursued with such alacrity and fury as none but female vengeance could devise. Twice have I been surrounded by hussars. My escape was almost a miracle, and who knows whether even here—

Wel. Be at ease, my Lord. No force shall intrude upon you here. You are on the borders
of

of a just prince, and in the house of a man, who honours hospitality.

Loh. You engage I am secure?

Wel. I do.

Loh. And will you allow me to remain with you, till a trusty friend, informed of my situation, can assist me in proceeding further?

Wel. As long as you please.

Loh. For I must confess to you that my sudden flight allowed me to rescue but little, and even this little has been stolen by people on whose fidelity I relied.

Wel. Command my purse.

Loh. Good man, you carry your generosity too far.

Wel. Not so, my Lord. I merely pay an old debt.

Loh. To me?

Wel. I too was once a wretched fugitive, and therefore consider every unfortunate man as a creditor sent by God.

Enter Mrs. Welling:

Mrs. W. Dear William, I beg pardon for disturbing you, but the people below are talking about soldiers.

Loh. (Alarmed.) What kind of soldiers?

Mrs. W. They are listening and looking among the bushes in the wood—they certainly are on no good errand.

Wel. Who can know that; for we live peaceably. They are, perhaps, looking for strawberries.

Enter

Enter Paulina.

Pau. Father, there are hussars belonging to the neighbouring prince in the village.

Loh. Oh God!

Wel. Well, what is that to us?

Pau. They go from house to house, and break open every room that is locked, like robbers.

Wel. Then they must be taken into custody, like robbers.

Pau. They are in search of somebody.

Wel. They have no right to search here.

Enter Rosa.

Ros. Father, there are hussars at the gate.

Wel. Let the gate be locked.

Ros. They have been asking our men whether there was not a stranger in the house.

Wel. And what answer was returned?

Ros. As you had not forbidden it, the men told the truth.

Wel. The truth is never forbidden in my house.

Loh. I am lost.

Wel. Be at ease. I am surety for your safety.

Enter Rehberg.

Reh. The whole court is full of hussars.

Wel. My dear Ann, these people have had a great deal of trouble to no purpose. Give them a little beer.

Reh. They insist with violence on your delivering up a prisoner.

Wel. They will be more civil, when they learn my determination.

Reh.

Reh. They threaten.

Wel. How many of them are there?

Reh. About twenty.

Wel. Then their threats are ridiculous.

Loh. Oh, rather deliver me into their hands. Shall I plunge you, too, worthy man, and your whole family into ruin?

Wel. Well, my Lord, I have pledged to you my word that you are in safety. I will abide by it.

Enter Dalner.

Dal. The devil has let loose a set of rascals, who act as if they were in an enemy's country.

Wel. Paulina, send some one by the back way into the village, and ask a dozen young fellows to come hither. *[Exit Pau.]*

Loh. How! Would you oppose them?

Wel. Be patient. We shall not be obliged to have recourse to extremities.

Dal. Hark ye, Rosa. Send a man to my house with orders that all the foresters come hither directly, with their guns and hangers. Do you hear? *[Exit Ros.]*

Loh. Oh, Sir! Return me the friend, of whom you robbed me in the wood.

Dal. Be quiet. Not a hair of your head shall be touched, by God. Understood?

Fre. (Without.) Back!

Brave. (The same.) Out of my way, boy!

Fre. This is not a pot-house.

Wel. Let him come, my son.

Enter Frederick and Brave.

Bra. (Sees the Count.) Ha! Ha! Have I found

found you at last? Follow me, my Lord, without opposition.

Loh. Sir, the person, in whose hands you are an instrument—

Bra. I am not an instrument, but a servant of my prince. Come with me instantly. The carriage waits.

Dal. [*Suppressing his anger.*] But you must know, Sir, that in this country it is not usual for people to break into a house, like a hawk into a lark's nest --understood?--- You must know, Sir, that we understand a little law, if you do not.

Fre. [*Attacking him on the other side.*] And you must know that the carriage may perhaps wait some time.

Mrs. W. [*Pulling him away.*] Frederick!

Bra. Who are you, and what do you mean?

Dal. We are people, who belong to this place --understood?

Fre. Yes, and the word of command is: To the right about face, and ride home again.

Mrs. W. [*Pulling him away.*] Frederick! Frederick!

Bra. What! Dare you attempt by abusive language—

Wel. Hold, hold! Your pardon, Sir. My friend and son are rather incensed at the illegal way in which you have entered this house.

Bra. Illegal! How do you know that?

Wel. How! I am the master of this house, and know my privileges.

Bra. I want nothing of you.

Wel. But you want to take away one, who is
enjoying

enjoying the rights of hospitality here. You want to do it by compulsion.

Bra. I hope you will be rational, and not oblige me to do so.

Wel. I beg you will produce your orders.

Bra. My orders! I don't know that I am answerable to you for my conduct,—but that is of no consequence. Here are my orders.

Wel. (*Opens the paper.*) You are surely joking, lieutenant. These orders are not from my prince.

Bra. But they are from mine.

Wel. To whom I owe no obedience.

Bra. But I do, and by my soul I have neglected it too long.

Wel. I do not perceive one syllable in these orders, which justifies you in disturbing the dominions of a neighbouring prince.

Bra. Enough! I know how far I dare proceed.

Wel. Has your prince commanded this?

Bra. I am not bound to answer that question.

Wel. And will mine submit to it?

Bra. With that I have nothing to do. In a word, the Count will please to come with me.

Wel. In a word, lieutenant, he shall not.

Bra. (*Starts.*) Shall not!

Wel. (*Emphatically*) No.

Bra. Sir, I advise you to retract this declaration, or it will be the cause of blood-shed.

Enter Paulina.

Paul. Father, there are not twelve, but forty of the villagers assembled in the court, and armed with forks.

Wel. Do you hear, lieutenant?

Bra. We are not afraid of such rabble.

Enter Rosa.

Ros. Mr. Dalner, the foresters are running down the hill.

Dal. These, Sir, are my lads, armed with guns and hangers—Marksmen, Sir, who can hit a button. Understood?

Bra. You surely do not mean to oppose my orders. Beware what you do. The Count is a criminal.

Loh. That am I not.

Wel. Lieutenant, you and I are no longer young. Let us have a little conversation together, in private. Strange will it be, if men like us, cannot part with each other on friendly terms.

Bra. With all my heart.

Wel. My dear Ann, take your daughters into another room.

Mrs. W. (*In a tone of apprehension.*) But, dearest husband—

Pau. and Ros. Dear father!

Wel. Be at ease. There is no danger. Mr. Rehberg, be kind enough to accompany them. Your assurances of my safety may make them less afraid.

[*Exeunt Mrs. W. Pau. Ros. and Reh.*]

Wel. (*To Dalner.*) Go you, my friend, with Frederick into the court, and see that our peasants do not begin a quarrel with the hussars.

Dal. I will. Not one of them shall move.

[*Exit.*]

Fre. But if the hussars behave improperly, I'll not answer for them.

[*Exit.*]

Wel

Wel. (*Calls after him in a serious tone.*) I command you to keep them quiet. You, my Lord, will be kind enough to step into the next room.

Bra. Hold! I shall not allow my prisoner to be out of sight.

Wel. (*After a pause.*) Well, then, he may remain here. I did not indeed wish—but circumstances make it necessary. He must, however, promise not to interrupt our conversation.

Loh. You know that here I must obey, and you, generous man, I willingly obey.

Bra. Wave all further preface, for my time is short.

Wel. Enough!—Lieutenant, you seem determined rigidly to follow your instructions.

Bra. I have been thirty years in service, and must know what I have to do.

Wel. But I well know that in the execution of severe orders you have not always been so exact.

Bra. Mr. Farmer, or whatever else you may be, this is very presumptuous language to an old officer.

Wel. Had you never before any orders of a similar nature?

Bra. None that I recollect.

Wel. It is, I own, a long time ago, and the circumstances may have escaped your memory. About twenty-seven years since, when Baron Wellingrode fled—[*Brave starts.*] were not you sent in pursuit of him?

Bra. (*Somewhat confused.*) How do you know that?

Wel. I know still more. You overtook him,

made him a prisoner in your own prince's territories, and yet,—allowed him to escape.

Bra. H m—yes—I remember—he escaped;

Wel. With your consent.

Bra. Who says that?

Wel. You ventured it at the risk of being cashiered

Bra. Who can prove that?

Wel. You even shared your purse with him: You were then a youth, whose heart could feel for the misfortunes of another. Has age made it callous?

Bra. Well—I own this account is true, but the case was quite different. Baron Wellingrode was rewarded by his prince with ingratitude, and the people loved him as their father, whereas Count Lohrstein—

Wel. Are you appointed his judge, or were you then the Baron's judge?

Bra. You strike home to me. You are right—I ought not to have connived at his escape, but I was under material obligations to him. He was my benefactor. When I was but a poor orphan, he procured me a situation in the Military Academy. Through his recommendation I was made a cornet, and had he not fallen, I should long since have had a troop. Never, never, can I think of that man, without being affected.—Gently rest his ashes!

Wel. (*Aside.*) Oh! what a blissful moment!

Bra. I undertook to go in pursuit of him only that I might escort him to a place of safety.—Sooner should my hand have withered than I would have laid it on my benefactor.

Wel. If the memory of this man be so dear to you, give liberty to the Count for his sake.

Bra.

Bra. (*To the Count.*) Why, he it was, who ruined Baron Wellingrode.

Loh. Not I—my wife—

Wel. Immaterial. If Wellingrode has pardoned him, and taken him under his protection—

Bra. Let him go, and throw himself upon his grave. That place of refuge will be more sacred to me than the altar.

Wel. Why upon his grave? Let him throw himself into his arms, (*Goes towards the Count with open arms*) and find safety on the bosom of a reconciled enemy.

Loh. Heavens! What is this?

Wel. (*Presses him to his heart.*) Now, Brave, tear him from your old patron's arms.

Bra. (*In the utmost astonishment.*) What!—Can you—you be—

Wel. I am Baron Wellingrode.

[*The Count sinks on his knee. Welling raises him, and gently seats him in a chair.*]

Bra. (*After a pause, during which he endeavours to compose himself, presses Welling's hand between both his own, and gazes intently at him for several moments.*) Yes, it is he—it is my benefactor. Alas! Have I then found him in *this* situation?

Wel. Content has no peculiar situation; but whether clad in ermine, or the peasant's frock, dwells only with affection and domestic comfort. Good Brave, I am truly happy.

Bra. That declaration will console me, at my dying hour. Oh, thou, whose ashes I so oft have blessed, whom I a thousand times have

wished back to our world that I might be able to evince my gratitude, tell me, can old Brave do nothing for you?—I'll inform the prince you are alive. I'll summon all your friends to appear in your behalf. Oh, how many still remember you, and bless you!

Wel. Not so, honest Brave. If I merit any recompence, bestow on me the liberty of this old man, whom the inscrutable ways of Providence have directed to my house—perhaps to try whether I was worthy of my present happiness.

Bra. Will you protect this man?

Wel. As long as I am able.

Bra. You have forgotten—

Wel. Every thing.

Bra. Revenge is sweet.

Wel. Forgiveness sweeter.

Bra. (*Deeply affected.*) Yes. Could I not have called to mind those venerable features, I should have known you by these noble sentiments. Feel, Count Lohrstein, feel how this man acts. You are free. My people shall depart immediately.

[*Wipes his eyes, shakes Welling's hand, and goes.*]

Loh. (*Quite abashed.*) My Lord—

Wel. Dear Count, I am no longer accustomed to hear that title.

Loh. Your revenge is sweet to your own sensations, but to mine, bitter.

Wel. He, who can feel thus, deserves no other vengeance to be practised towards him.

Loh. To be confounded and ashamed before an enemy is insupportable sensation.

Wel.

Wel. Am I your enemy?

Loh. My wife's ambition robbed you of every thing.

Wel. And my heart restored to me every thing.

Loh. Your estates—

Wel. Those you mean I but inherited—those I now possess I have earned. Oh, my Lord, a tree raised by ourselves affords more pleasure than a whole wood planted by chance.

Loh. You were deprived of your rank—

Wel. I am loved here for my own sake.

Loh. The favour of the prince—

Wel. Favour I never aimed at. I only sought friendship in a soil where it does not grow.

Loh. The power of doing good.

Wel. That dwells in every one, and may, like air, be compressed into a narrow compass. Even the beggar can purchase, with his farthing, this happy conviction.

Loh. You will, perhaps, at last even convince me that I am your benefactor, and—

Wel. (*Hastily interrupting him.*) That you are Count. By the Almighty, that you are, for, had not your power been directed against me, I never should have gained this pleasing harmony of all my feelings; this perfect satisfaction, this peace, which neither passion nor reproach can disturb. I am healthy, in easy circumstances, and possessed of an affectionate wife, and three good children,—I am never peevish, never tormented by that demon, *ennui*—I am familiar with nature, and surrounded by uncorrupted people. I find sincerity in every hut, affection in every eye, and peace in my own breast.—

Point

Point out to me the man at court, who, while basking in the sunshine of favour, can say as much—Yes, Count, you are indeed my benefactor.

Loh. Is it not enough to have abashed me? Would you excite my envy, too?

Wel. Share my happiness by remaining with us.

Loh. Alas! It is too late. The art of being happy must, like other arts, be learnt in youth. When old, it can no longer be comprehended.

Wel. You are mistaken. The art of being happy, consists in seriously wishing to be so.

Loh. Yes, if you could raise my first wife from the dead, if you could restore my unhappy son to me—

Paulina rushes breathless into the room.

Pau. Father! Father!

Wel. What now, my child? Is your mother ill?

Pau. No. Lewis—Lewis—

Wel. Well?

Pau. [*Scarcely able to articulate.*] He is dead:
[*Sinks upon a chair.*]

Wel. God forbid! Has he killed himself?

Pau. No—the hussars— [Wel. is going:

Enter Ernorf.

Ern. [*In a tone of triumph.*] Such are the consequences—

Wel. What is the matter, Mr. Ernorf? Speak! My poor girl cannot.

Ern. Thus it is, when all sorts of people are admitted into a family.

Wel.

Wel. I beseech you, for heaven's sake to wave your comments and relate what has happened.

Ern. Well, then—Mr. Lewis, with his usual forwardness, has thought proper to attack the hussars, who, in return, have struck off his nose and ears, and split his scull completely asunder.

Wel. Is he dead?

Ern. He is struggling, as yet,—but that will soon be over.

Wel. Where is he?

Ern. He was carried into the room where your labourers sit. (*Exit Wel. hastily.*) He'll not make any more verses now, but I will be so generous as to sketch an elegy for him. [*Exit.*

[*Paulina sheds not a tear, but looks around her with wild despair.*

Loh. (*Approaching her compassionately.*) Good lady, who is this Lewis?

Pau. (*With a convulsive smile.*) Don't you know him?

Loh. Perhaps your brother?

Pau. (*With heartfelt sorrow.*) Yes—my brother.

Loh. Compose yourself. He may still recover.

Pau. May he? Are you a surgeon? Oh, save him!

Loh. No, dear lady, I am not a surgeon.

Pau. (*Sinks on her knees before the chair.*) Then save him, thou, oh God!

Loh. (*Looks at her with sympathy.*) Good father! Where is thy peace and happiness now?

The curtain falls.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT THE FIFTH.

Enter Mrs. Welling, quite exhausted.

Mrs. W. (Seats herself.) I can no more.—
Weary as I am, I can find no rest.—

Enter Dalner.

Dal. (Wiping his forehead.) A hot day this,
good neighbour—understood?

Mrs. W. Alas, Mr. Dalner! What an intermixture of joy and sorrow!

Dal. All's well that ends well.

Mrs. W. They won't admit me to my Lewis.

Dal. He must be kept quite composed.

Mrs. W. Have you seen him?

Dal. No—nor do I wish it. I don't like even to be present when a stag is dying.

Mrs. W. Oh, Heavens! Then you really think he will die?

Enter Paulina.

Paul. I can stay no longer with the stranger.

Mrs. W. Who sent you to him?

Paul. My father wished it. He thought it might dissipate my anxiety, but his conduct is so strange that he quite alarms me. He walks up and down the room, talking to himself. When I speak to him he fumbles, and if he makes any reply, it is quite unintelligible.

Dal.

Dal. His misfortunes may perhaps have—
(*pointing to his head*) understood?

Pau. And no one was compassionate enough to bring me any tidings of Lewis. Is he still alive?

Mrs. W. Yes, he is.

Pau. Will he recover?

Mrs. W. The surgeon and your father are with him, but they will not allow any other person to enter the room.

Pau. Oh! You won't tell me—but I am sure he is dead.

Dal. He is not indeed. A couple of wounds seldom kill a man.

Enter Frederick hastily.

Fre. (*In ill-humour.*) The infernal scoundrels have better horses than our's.

Mrs. W. Where have you been? You seem quite heated.

Fre. Your foresters, Mr. Dalner, and I, and a dozen of the villagers, followed the hussars as long as we could see the dust, but we couldn't keep pace with them.

Dal. Well, and suppose you had overtaken them?

Fre. Then, as I hope to be saved, they should have paid dearly for every drop of blood, which Lewis has shed.

Pau. I thank you, brother.

Mrs. W. And if they had wounded you in the same way?

Dal. What a hot-headed stripling! How do you know whether Lewis was not guilty of the first provocation?

Pau.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

Pau. I am sure he was not.

Fre. If he attacked them, I am sure he had good reason for it.

Mrs. W. Does nobody yet know how the quarrel arose?

Fre. How can any body know it? Lewis is unable to speak, and the hussars have run away.

Mrs. W. Were none of our people concerned, then?

Fre. Not one.

Enter Welling.

[All surround him.]

Pau. Well, father?

Dal. How go matters on?

Mrs. W. Is Lewis better?

Fre. Will he recover?

Wel. He is out of danger.

Mrs. W. and Pau. Heaven be praised!

Dal. I am glad to hear it.

Fre. I must go to him.

Wel. Hold, Frederick! The surgeon has prescribed quiet as the most effectual medicine.—His wounds have been examined. That in the head is of no consequence—the one in his arm is larger but not dangerous. It was only the loss of blood, which overpowered him, and he is come to himself again.

Mrs. W. You know, then, what has happened?

Wel. No. He was going to tell me, but the surgeon would not allow him to speak, and desired us to leave the room, as repose was absolutely

lately necessary. Nobody but Mr. Rehberg remained with him.

Mrs. W. He is not in want of any thing, I hope?

Wel. I have provided every thing necessary.

Pau. Are you sure of that, father? If you would allow me—if I might—

Wel. (*In a tone of admonition.*) Paulina?

Pau. You are right. It is improper.

Enter Rehberg.

Reh. Lewis insists on speaking to you.

Wel. I will come to him, when he has slept awhile.

Reh. He says he cannot sleep, be easy, or recover, till he has had some conversation with you.

Wel. If the surgeon will allow it—

Reh. The surgeon thinks composure of mind still more necessary than sleep, and I too am of opinion that if his soul be wounded, you may effect more than the whole faculty.

Wel. Enough! I hasten to him. [*Going.*]

Pau. (*Shrieks*) Oh! There he is.

Enter Lewis,

Pale, and rather weak, with his head bound, and his arm in a sling.

Mrs. W. (*Runs to him, and embraces him.*) Lewis!

Fre. (*Shakes him by the hand.*) Brave lad!

Wel. Lewis, can you, when scarcely recovering from a swoon, thus creep up stairs again?

Lew. Oh, I am not ill—I was only stunned.

Wel. I was just coming to you.

Lew. My impatience and anxiety have driven me hither. Allow me a few words without a witness.

Wel. Be seated, then. Go, friends. Neighbour, I know you will not take it amiss.

Dal. Not another word. Come, neighbour Rehberg. [*Exeunt Dal. and Reh.*]

Fre. Lewis I have such a regard for you that I have not thought of Louisa before. I'll away to meet her.

Pau. Oh, Lewis! How pale you look!

[*Hides her face, and exit into her chamber.*]

Mrs. W. Don't let him talk too much, good William, lest he should irritate his wounds.

Lew. Be not afraid, dear mother. He will heal my deepest wound. [*Exit Mrs. W.*]

Wel. Now, Lewis we are alone.

Lew. Father, I am obliged to you for inestimable kindnesses, and beg to-day a greater than any of them.

Wel. You know me. Speak.

Lew. You must have been surprised on hearing that I attacked the hussars.

Wel. I was, indeed, for I have always thought you of a peaceable disposition.

Lew. When I left you, I intended to travel a few miles before sun-set, but my heart was so heavy, that my feet could not support me. I went to the little inn, which was full of hussars. I left them—wandered into the garden, and seated myself under an elm, where I indulged myself in a flood of tears. Ere long, two of the hussars joined me. They laughed at me for my effeminacy—as they called it—but I paid no regard

regard to them. At length they ceased their taunts, and began to converse about their own concerns—in which, alas, I was too nearly concerned.

Wel. You!

Lew. They spoke in opprobrious terms of my father.

Wel. Your father!

Lew. They called him a villain, and by the Almighty that is he not.

Wel. Who is your father?

Lew. A weak, but a good man. He was high in office—Heaven knows what has lately happened to him! He must have fled, and these hussars, as far as I can learn, are in pursuit of him. The two I mentioned, having spoken of him in terms the most abusive, I could no longer refrain—I considered not that I alone was opposing twenty—I considered nothing but my father's honour, and struck the villain, whose language had been most opprobrious, to the earth. Of course, I immediately became the victim of my rashness.

Wel. Lewis!—Is it possible?—Who are you?

Lew. Oh!

Wel. You are in search of one Count Lohrstein?

Lew. He it is.

Wel. He is your father!

Lew. Yes.

Wel. (*Aside.*) Oh God, what bliss hast thou reserved for me on this day! (*Aloud.*) Speak, worthy youth! Let me have all your confidence. Let not two fathers be too many for you. Relate to me the mysterious particulars of your fate.

Lew. My first education and my heart destined me to act a happy, but not a brilliant part in the world. My mother was formed for domestic comfort, and formed me for the enjoyment of domestic comfort. She died. An ambitious, deceitful woman succeeded to my father's affections. Through her, he became minister—through her I too was to make my fortune (as it is called) at court. I was married to a woman whom I knew not, but whom I discovered, when too late, to be the prince's mistress. Yes. Then I might have raised myself, from step to step, in splendid infamy, and bending under the load of turpitude, might have climbed to the summit of courtly favour. But, thanks to Heaven, the sentiments, which she, who now enjoys celestial bliss, had graven in my mind, could not be eradicated by my step-mother. Soon as I discovered the labyrinth, in which they had involved my inexperience, my resolution was irrevocably formed. I fled. From a delicacy, which was, perhaps, carried to too great an excess, I took nothing with me. Beg I could not—I knew not how to work, so that at last, driven by hunger and despair, I accepted the offers of the recruiting party, with which you found me.

Wel. Now, all is plain—and how do I rejoice to find it thus! How willingly do I request your pardon for the suspicion, which to-day I could not quite suppress!

Lew. My character must have appeared dubious to you, and alas! that alone made my separation from you so painful.

Wel. Why did you not sooner discover yourself?

Lew.

Lew. Could I accuse my father—or could I assist him? Even now, I would not have broken my silence, had not my anxiety for his safety compelled me to do it. He is pursued, and suspected to be in this neighbourhood. I am, at present, incapable of assisting him; for my arm is maimed, and the loss of blood has so much reduced me, that I cannot even go in search of him, to give him notice that he is pursued. Oh, I beseech you, kind, benevolent, generous man; I beseech you, send all your people through the wood, the roads, the hills, and if they find him—have compassion on his age,—on his misfortunes.

Wel. I engage that he shall find beneath my roof a safe retreat. But at present attend to the wounds, which reflect so much honour upon you, and quietly await the issue. Will you do this?

Lew. Quietly! Oh!

Wel. Go into my study. Throw yourself upon the couch, and sleep if you can.

Lew. Bring me some account of my father. Till then I cannot sleep. [Exit.]

Wel. {*Looking after him in great emotion.*} Indeed! — — God has been pleased to place in my hands the means of rewarding thy virtue, noble youth. To release thee from bondage so unworthy of thy heart is my lot. (*Goes to a chamber-door.*) Paulina!

Enter Paulina.

Pau. My father!

Wel. Lewis is in my study.

Pau. (*Alarmed.*) Not ill, again?

Wel.

Wel. Not ill, but alone, and that he dislikes. Go, and keep him company.

Pau. (*Astonished.*) How, my father!

Wel. Have you not understood me?—I wish you to keep Lewis company. Is that so difficult to you?

Pau. Oh no—I do not understand it—but I obey most willingly. [*Exit to Lewis.*]

Wel. What extatic moments now await me! —Yes, good Brave, you are right: *Such* revenge is sweet — — But they are both weak and exhausted.—How shall I prepare them for the interview? I must consult my Ann. [*Going.*]

Enter Zahn.

Zah. Unannounced, but not, I hope, unwelcome—

Wel. Heavens! What do I see? Zahn! My honest Zahn!

Zah. Will your Excellency allow a faithful old servant—

Wel. Silence! Silence! No Excellency dwells here. Come into my arms, thou honest man, thou only friend, from whom misfortune has not severed me. [*Casps him with fervour in his arms.*]

Zah. (*Returning his embrace with reserve.*) An honour—as well as a pleasure — — Oh that I should live to enjoy this hour in my old age!

Wel. What, for Heaven's sake has brought you to my peaceful retreat?

Zah. (*Somewhat ceremoniously.*) His Serene Highness has been pleased to command—had he been pleased to appoint me one of his Privy Council, he would not have so highly honoured me—

Wel.

Wel. What is your business, then, dear Zahn? I see tears in your eyes.

Zah. I humbly beg pardon—but just at this moment I cannot suppress them.

[Turns away and wipes his eyes.]

Wel. (*Surveys him, and turns aside, much affected.*) Fifty years has he lived at court, yet has it had no influence but on his manners—
(*Aside*) I hear the old prince is dead?

Zah. (*Composing himself.*) Yes, it has pleased the Highest to take him home, and what I prophesied twenty-seven years ago has happened. The prayers of the poor and forsaken, whose father you always were, have been heard, and his Serene Highness restores to you all your former offices, estates, and dignities.

Wel. How could the prince learn—

Zah. Pardon me, my Lord. When his Highness was pleased to manifest his sentiments, I found it impossible to keep silence any longer. I therefore announced myself, obtained an audience, and reported what I knew.

Wel. Your intentions were good, but—

Zah. His Highness was highly delighted:—
“Such a man,” he was pleased to observe, “is wanting both for me and my subjects. Haste, and invite him to court.”

Wel. I again appear at court!

Zah. Yes, I, old as I am, shall have the honour of again serving in the administration of your Excellency. I own I cannot proceed with the same facility as twenty-seven years ago, but the pleasure of doing my duty under my old worthy director will make me young again.

Wel.

Wel. No, dear Zahn. To court I shall not return. I am not disposed again to encounter the cabals of Countess Lohrstein.

Zah. No, my Lord. The Countess has finished her cabals, and at present is a prisoner in the castle.

Wel. How! Was she not closely allied to the Prince's *female friend*.

Zah. Ladies who are allied in that way, seldom hold their posts *ad dies vitæ*. The order of the Privy Council was indeed issued at the instigation of the Countess Lohrstein's late daughter-in-law.

Wel. Late!—How so?

Zah. His Serene Highness has been pleased to declare the marriage null and void.

Wel. Indeed!

Zah. On account of her having been shamefully forsaken by her husband.

Wel. (*Embracing him with fervour.*) Oh, my friend! This intelligence is more welcome to me than the restoration of my estates and rank.

Zah. I do not exactly comprehend—

Wel. You soon will. You soon shall share with me the enjoyment of this evening.

Zah. It is his Highness's wish that you should return with me immediately.

Wel. No, dear Zahn, I shall not return with you.

Zah. This most gracious invitation is written by his own hand.

Wel. (*Breaks the seal, and reads it.*) Most kind,

kind, most gracious, and I could almost say, most sincere—but I shall not go.

Zah. I am astonished.

Wel. Sit but one evening at my frugal board, and you will no longer be astonished. (*Draws out a small key.*) Look, dear Zahn, this key is rusty. (*Opens the closet with much difficulty.*) It will scarcely do it's duty. (*Takes a packet out of the closet.*) Here are the insignia of the order, to which I belonged—my diploma—and all the remains of my former greatness. I pledge to you my word that this closet has not been opened during five-and-twenty years.

Zah. Your Excellency opens it to-day for the good of your country.

Wel. Can my country be so devoid of honest men as to make this necessary? No. Virtue will appear at court, as soon as the court will respect her.

Zah. For the good of your family—

Wel. Enough. My family shall decide the matter. Till then, good Zahn, I claim your secrecy.

Zah. I know how to obey.

Wel. Let me but have time to recollect myself; occurrences have followed each another so rapidly to-day, that I feel I am appointed by Heaven to make many people happy, yet know not how to begin. Come, honest Zahn! (*Takes his hand.*) Walk into this room—we shall soon see each other again. (*Opens the door and calls.*) Neighbour, I send another friend to you, and put him under your protection, till I have finished some business, which just now engages me.

Dal.

Dal. [*Within.*] Understood. Come in.

[*Zahn goes in.*]

Wel. Mr. Rehberg, I wish to have a little conversation with you.

Enter Rehberg.

Reh. Here I am.

Wel. You wish to marry my daughter Rosa, I presume?

Reh. What a question!

Wel. She is your's.

Reh. Mr. Welling!—Why this sudden alteration in your sentiments? I am as poor as I was.

Wel. But I am not so pertinacious as I was.

Reh. If you be not in earnest—this is cruel.

Wel. If you any longer doubt it, you will hurt me.

Reh. [*Falls on his neck.*] Oh worthy mysterious man!

Wel. As to the mysterious part of my character, it will soon be explained. Have the goodness, my son, to assemble my whole family, and all my friends, in this room immediately. You will find Paulina there. I wish to converse on a subject, which relates to us all, and on the decision of which each shall have a vote.

[*Takes the packet from the table and is going. Rosa meets him.*]

Wel. Ha!—Just at the right time. [*Takes her hand, leads her to Rehberg, joins their hands, and embraces them.*] God bless you! [*Exit:*]

Ros. What does this mean?

Reh. That Rosa is mine.

Ros. How! — I must rub my eyes to be certain

certain that I am not dreaming.—Have you obtained a living?

Reh. No.

Ros. Oh, I don't ask on my own account, for I am really glad you are poor. I always think one can't convince a rich man, how much one loves him.

Reh. Whom do you call a rich man? Oh, I am rich indeed. *[Clasps her in his arms.]*

Enter Mrs. Welling.

Mrs. W. Rosa, remember that you are still a great distance from the altar.

Reh. No. We have reached it, if your blessing be our conductor.

Mrs. W. How am I to understand this?

Ros. My father has consented.

Mrs. W. Indeed!

Reh. And if his parental blessing be echoed from your lips—

Mrs. W. With all my heart—although I do not comprehend—

Reh. He will soon be here again. My transport had almost made me forget what he desired. All, who are united to him by affection or by friendship are to assemble in this room. *[Goes to the door of the dining-room.]* Mr. Dalner—Sir—we request your company here.

Enter Dalner, Zahn, and Erederrick.

Fre. Mother, this gentleman is one of my father's friends.

Mrs. W. You are welcom, Sir.

Dal. Mr. Zahn, this is the lady of the house.

Zah.

Zah. Accept, Madam, the assurances of my respect and—

Mrs. W. No more, I beg, Sir. You are among simple country people.

Reh. [*Who has in the mean time opened the door of the study.*] By order of your father, dear Paulina, I invite you hither—as well as Lewis, if his strength will allow it.

Enter Paulina and Lewis.

Mrs. W. [*Astonished.*] How, Paulina!—You in that room!

Pau. My father himself sent me to keep Lewis company.

Mrs. W. Well, for the first time in my life I cannot discover the motives for your father's conduct.

Zah. [*Attentively observing Lewis—aside.*] I should know that young man.

Lew. [*Aside.*] Heavens! What can this man want here?

Enter Welling,

With a star upon his coat, and the riband of the order. He holds in his hand the Prince's letter. On his appearance all speak confusedly among each other.

Mrs. W. Dear husband, what means this?

Pau. Father, is it you?

Dal. Neighbour, are we going to have a masquerade?

Reh. I suspect a secret here.

Ros. Brother, what is all this?

Etc.

Fre. Don't you see I am as much astonished as yourself?

Lew. [*Aside.*] That is the order to which my father belonged.

Zah. [*Aside.*] I alone have the key to this enigma.

Wel. You seem as if you think me little better than a lunatic?—Be patient. In one moment the mystery will be solved—but let me not be interrupted. Lewis, how do you feel? Have you sufficient strength to receive from me a present, which your filial affection has obtained from fate?

Lew. [*Starts.*] Father, I do not comprehend you.

Wel. Has your heart no presages?

Lew. [*With tremulous utterance.*] Were it so—if my heart deceive me not—oh, do not keep me in suspense.

Wel. Paulina, go for our guest. (*Exit Pau.*)

Lew. (*In great agitation.*) Guest!—And these mysterious words—may I accompany Paulina?

Wel. Stay where you are—I have said enough. Doubt—hope—think of your wounds—and moderate your rapture. (*Lewis breathes with difficulty and rivets his eye upon the door, no longer observing what passes round him. Welling points to Rehberg.*) I have given this man my promise, dear wife, that he shall have Rosa.

Mrs. W. I could scarcely believe it, for according to our conversation yesterday—

Wel. He was first to obtain a benefice—and he has obtained one. My son, I congratulate
you

you on your appointment to the living of Birkendorf.

Reh. (*Quite astonished.*) Birkendorf—Dear Sir—how can you—

Wel. Be so forward as to promise what—

Zah. (*Smiling.*) The gentleman may be at ease.

Mrs. W. But explain to us—

Dal. In truth, neighbour—

Lew. (*Distracted with anxiety.*) I hear footsteps.

Wel. Make room for him, children. He has been long enough deprived of his father.

All. His father!

Enter Lohrstein and Paulina.

Lewis stands at a short distance from the Count, and in great agitation stretches out the arm, which is at liberty.

Loh. (*Violently terrified.*) What phantom do I behold?—Wert thou slain, bloody form, and comest thou to demand revenge?

Lew. (*Kneeling.*) Forgive your son.

Loh. Forgive!—I, thee!—Oh, if I be not wrong in thinking thee a spirit—come into my arms. (*Lewis rushes into his arms.*)—What is this?—I again feel a heart beating against mine—I feel a warm tear upon my cheek. Am I, then, still beloved by any one on earth?—Lewis dost thou still love me?

[*Lewis kneels and covers his father's hand with tears and kisses.*]

Wel. Spare him, my lord. That he loves you
these

these wounds declare, which he received to-day in defence of your honour.

Loh. And thou kneel'st to me!—Let me—let me kneel. [*Is sinking.*]

Lew. (*Hinders it, and presses him with fervour to his heart.*) Father!

Loh. What have I lost? I hear a voice which calls me father.

Lew. Wealth and dignity divided us—poverty and lowliness restore us to each other.

Loh. Where was I? What apathy had crept around my heart?—Forgive me, Lewis, for thy mother's sake.

Lew. I have not been in distress—thanks to this worthy man, who received me as his son.

Loh. How! Has he been *thy* benefactor too?—Could you consider the son of your enemy as your own son?

All. His enemy!

Dal. I guess how this is.

Loh. Oh, my Lord!

All. Lord!

Loh. What revenge is this!

Wel. The only revenge, which becomes me.

Lew. What means this?

Wel. My friends, it is time that I solve this enigma. Will you pardon me, my dearest Ann, if I have concealed this only secret from you? You will, I am certain, when I tell you I was obliged to promise inviolable secrecy to your father on his death-bed.

Mrs. W. (*Confused and astonished.*) Are you really a Lord, then?

Wel. I am Baron Wellingrode, formerly the
K 2 favourite

favourite of a Prince, and not happy—now an honest farmer, and the happiest man on earth.

(All shew signs of astonishment.)

Wel. This letter from a good Prince, restores to me my rank, estates, and former office. This man is come to conduct me to court.

Mrs. W. Fre. Pau. and Ros. (Alarmed.) To court!

Wel. The hand, which has here so long held the plough, has forgotten how to guide the rudder of a state. Nevertheless, if you, my dear wife and children, think this alteration in our fortunes enviable, I will comply with your wishes.

Mrs. W. Oh, no!

Fre. Pau. and Ros. No, no!

Wel. Consider well. What thousands fight for, in vain, is offered you by chance.

Pau. What do we want?

Fre. We are accustomed to our present situation.

Ros. What can we do at court?

Wel. You may hereafter repent—

Fre. Pau. and Ros. Never! Never!

Wel. Is this your firm desire?

Fre. Pau. and Ros. It is! It is!

Wel. (Opens his arms.) Come, then, to my heart.

(The children approach with a degree of timidity.)

Wel. What now? Are you afraid of me?

Ros. Oh, no—but the star—

Pa. The riband—

Fre. You are grown a Baron so suddenly—

Wel.

Wel. My dear Ann, you seem to keep at a distance, too.

Mrs. W. My dear William, I am sorry to do it—but you appear almost a stranger to me—

Wel. And shall I return to a situation, which causes a distance between me and my family? Shall I wear a star which withholds my wife and children from my bosom. (*Throws the riband away with violence.*) Take it—take it—release me from this gew-gaw.

(The children run to him with delight, take the star from his breast, and lay it aside with the riband.)

Fre. There!—Now you are our father again.

Pau. Now we know you.

Ros. Now we love you.

Wel. And you, good Ann?

Mrs. W. Thus you offered me your hand twenty-five years ago.

Wel. You see, dear Zahn—

Zah. (*Wiping his eyes.*) I do, and wish his Serene Highness had seen it also.

Wel. To court I'll go, but only to thank the prince, and petition for the pardon of this man.

Loh. You destroy me.

Wel. How! By acting a self-interested part? I shall only be promoting the happiness of our son.—Lewis, the Prince has declared your marriage void.

(Lewis gazes at him in silent astonishment.)

Wel

Wel. Count, the young people like each other. Will you seal our reconciliation?

Loh. Will I! How can you ask? (*Lewis clasps Paulina with ardour in his arms.*) Oh, God!

Ros. (*Giving her hand to Rehberg.*) Now we are all happy.

Frc. All.

Mrs. W. (*Much affected.*) All.

Wel. And through me.—My children, I have doubled, and I have found a brother.

[*Painting to the Count.*

Dal. Two brothers, neighbour—understood?

Wel. Come then to me, all. Come into the arms of the happiest man on earth. Are you still afraid of me? No star now hides my heart. Let me press you all to it.

[*Mrs. Welling sinks on his bosom, while the surrounding children hang on him and caress him.*

The curtain falls.

THE END.

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